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A FERVENT PRAYER.

BY G. L. F.

Ah! happy hours we've lingered here,
Beneath the listening moon.
Why did you come at all, my dear,
To fly away so soon?

Yet but a moment longer stay,
Nor hear Time's jealous call!
I've told you much I meant to say,
But have not told you all.

So take my hand! We must not part
While you my love deny.
Oh, hear the story of my heart
Before you say good-bye!

Since first I looked in your bright eyes,
Since first I heard your voice,
I felt that life held out a prize
That bade my soul rejoice.

Since then my heart, the whole day long,
Sings on in love's delight;
And dreams but echo love's dear song,
And fill with joy the night.

I look into your eyes again,
And seek an answer there
To what was but a question then,
But now a fervent prayer!

Give love for love! My eager heart
Is waiting your reply.
Oh, say that we need never part—
Need never say good-bye!

THE KING'S RUBIES

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A TERRIBLE PENALTY," "HIS DEAREST SIN," "MISS FORRESTER'S LAND STEWARD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XII.

WHILE Teresa sang he leaned just outside the open window, listening to the full young voice in which he always fancied he detected tones no one else could hear.

It held him in a trance, and carried him back to the first night he had heard it and discovered that the singer was a lonely unloved child.

He looked at her as she sat at the piano, with the warm evening sunshine glinting on her beautiful hair.

"Loved—sheltered—for always," he murmured, and suddenly passed into the room and went behind her, laying his hands over hers. She looked up into his eyes as he drew her head against him.

"Darling, do you understand?" he whispered.

"Sometimes I can't bear it when I think of what might have been—all the bitter struggle you would have to endure; and now—— When such thoughts come over me, I want to have you with me. Are you so happy that you have no wish left apart from me—no regret?"

"No—none," she replied, under her breath. "I was not afraid of the life before me—not as you were—but——"

"But what, Teresita?"

She rose from the piano with an impetuous movement, turning to him and whispering, as he folded her closely in his arms—

"It wasn't shelter I cared for, but to be sheltered by you. And now—I'm frightened sometimes——"

"My, dearest? You cannot have too much love."

"Oh, no, no! But to be so happy! Can it last? And if something came? If it were broken up?"

Silently Esdaile caressed and soothed her. He shared her mood, feeling in that hour the frailty of human happiness; but in the thought that the love between them was eternal he found peace.

He said something of this to her presently, the girl drinking in his words and then raising her face, seeking the kiss that was to drive away the last shadow from her brow.

And Esdaile, as he gave the kiss, wondered if there was any sorrow that could touch him so long as his love was by his side.

* * * * * *

"I can't think what boys were created for!" soliloquised Lord Wyndham, as he drew rein slowly before a house in Eton Square. "They are always in the way when they ought to be out of it, or out of the way when they ought to be in it!"

He dismounted and looked round; there was not a boy to be seen.

"And this brute of mine won't stand still even while I go and ring the bell!" he said.

"Want your horse held, sir?" said a hoarse voice behind Wyndham.

He turned quickly. A man had stopped and was touching his hat—a man who looked as if he had not had much to eat for many days past, and who gazed at Lord Wyndham with a pitiful eagerness in his dark eyes and haggard face.

"Yes, I do," said his lordship. "I shan't be ten minutes; but keep a tight hold on the horse—he's awfully fresh."

"Yes, sir—I see that."

Wyndham looked closely at the man as he handed him the bridle, then went up the steps to the house.

"The poor man," he thought looks half starved; but he handles the horse as if he were used to the stable."

Then the door opened and he disappeared.

The man was occupied for a few minutes in calming the horse, who objected to a strange hand, but presently seemed to understand the gentle treatment to which he was being subjected.

A well-dressed man, passing by, paused as if to admire the horse; but his eyes were speedily turned to the temporary groom.

"Tisn't you, Varcoe?" he inquired in a low voice.

Varcoe looked up with a start and an angry gleam in his eyes.

"Tisn't any one else," he replied through his teeth. "I'm trying to earn a penny honestly, and you let me alone! I've been harried enough since—since"—his voice sank, the defiant eyes turned aside—"I came out of that place."

"My good fellow, I didn't even know you were out."

"That's odd!" said Varcoe, with a hard laugh. "'Twas you who run me in; and I thought you'd have known my time."

The detective was a kind-hearted man, and, like Derek Esdaile, he had felt strangely attracted by this rough daring fellow. He answered good humoredly—

"I'll let you alone, certainly, as far as I can. Have you been trying for employment?"

"Yes."

"And failed?"

"Why, of course! Your people dog me and tell the gentlemen all about me. They won't let a chap leave his old games, not if it were ever so."

"They've got their duty to do, Varcoe. Have you been to the Prisoners' Aid Society?"

"No—and don't mean to!" exclaimed Varcoe, with a savageness Esdaile would have understood.

The man, notwithstanding his degradation, had a remnant of the pride that is strong in the class he had sprung from.

"That's very foolish," observed Stephen Hall composedly.

"Maybe it is. I mean to stick to it. Don't you let that gentleman see you talking to me, or he'll think I want to make off with the horse."

"Bless your heart, man, he wouldn't know me."

"No?" sneered Varcoe. "He isn't oversmart then. You 'tecs' always carry the cut about with you."

The detective was mortal, and, though he meant to offer Varcoe some money, this speech made him change his mind, and the laugh with which Varcoe turned away did not mend matters. Hall walked off with a stiff "Good day."

Lord Wyndham came down the steps, looking bright and happy. Varcoe glanced at him curiously, touching his hat again with his inborn respect for his betters, and held the stirrup while he mounted.

"Thank you, my man!" said Wyndham. "Here's a shilling for you. Good morning!"

"Thank you, sir!" exclaimed Varcoe, his hoarse tones softening. "Good morning, sir!"

Wyndham rode off, and Varcoe sat down upon a doorstep and looked at the money in his hand. A shilling! He had only expected sixpence. And for holding a horse ten minutes.

But he did not think of it as charity; and the gentleman did not badger him with questions and preach to him. It would last him a day or two if he slept in the Park.

He would go and get some food before the flunkeys turned him off the steps. He got up slowly and walked down the street.

He had tramped here, there, and everywhere for work; he had almost starved in the midst of plenty; and craved madly for the drink he had denied himself.

Up and down the pitiless streets, with his terrible memories burning within him, and never a soul to lend him a hand or to give him a day's work for a day's bread. It was all the fault of the police, he said, who stamped upon a man when he was down, and hounded him out of the chance of living a decent life.

As he was leaving the square, a victoria came along. The lady who was reclining in the smart equipage leaned a little forward as she swept past Varcoe; and, as she did so, a keen observer would have said that her eyes dilated slightly. Varcoe however did not notice her as he trudged on dejectedly.

After satisfying his hunger with some coarse food if a low coffee shop, he went into St. James' Park, lay down in the sun, and slept away the afternoon.

When he awoke the old craving for drink was upon him, and the public houses were being lighted up. The brightness enticed him, for the evening had fallen lowering and gray. He went into a side street and paused outside a public house.

Presently he half pushed the door open, then let it swing to again. He saw before him a dim picture of a garden and cottage, a long road, and the waving trees on each side of it; but the next moment he thrust the vision aside, flung the door back, and strode into the bar with staggering footsteps, tossing down the money for a glass of whiskey.

The barman thought he was drunk, and refused to serve him; the license had only recently been marked for some disorderly proceedings there, and just now the landlord was very careful.

Varcoe declared that he was not drunk, and that he would have the drink if he died for it. There was the money; he could pay for what he had.

The barman did not need much inducement to give way—besides, he could see now, that he had made a mistake; and, so long as the customer was sober when he came in, he might get as drunk as he liked. Varcoe drank the fiery spirit as though it were water; but it was not enough—he must have more. And so his shilling went.

* * * * * *

"Now then," said a gruff voice. "Wake up; it's closing time!"

A rude shake effectually aided the voice. Varcoe started up, still dazed.

"Where—what?" he muttered, pushing his fingers through his dark tangled hair. "Closing time? Yes—the blinds are all down and the lights are out. I won't harm them. Good heavens—what am I saying?"

He rose to his feet; the long heavy sleep had sobered him. He remembered lying down upon this bench with his hat for a pillow.

"Come—be sharp!" said the landlord, pushing him to the door. "Good night!"

Varcoe hurried out into the street and walked along steadily enough.

Early the next morning, somewhere about four o'clock, a policeman knocked up the inmates of a house in a quiet West end street, and made the startling announcement that someone had broken into the house.

On being admitted, the policeman's statement was confirmed by the fact that a window was unfastened which the master of the house himself had secured.

A search was made, and a desk containing a small amount of money was found to have been rifled. Singularly enough, too, some food had been taken from the pantry.

"Well, sir, you're lucky!" said the policeman. "I can tell you the thief must have been up to his work. I never saw a neater entrance nor a cleaner job. I couldn't make up my mind for some minutes about that window having been tampered with. The man must have been disturbed—hungry, too, I should say."

The policeman departed, the disturbed inmates slept again; and so did Frank Varcoe, but not in the park.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE West-end was emptying fast; there were last balls, last visits, last everything, and the rush to do in one hour the work of two was terrific. The country house invitations were almost all filled up; every one was going to receive or be received.

It seemed to Blanche Gifford that only she in all her circle was left out. From Leigh's Hollow she had only short notes in answer to her long letters. Teresa could certainly write a diplomatic note; but Blanche was sharp enough to perceive that the writer set limits to intimacy.

"What does it mean?" she asked herself. "Is it he or she? Am I to fail when all seemed ripe? Can they intend to relegate me to the list of polite acquaintances? Can Esdaile—— No—impossible! He hasn't the clues to make him dream of it. Suppose I call on Lady Wyndham and see what is going forward!"

Mabel Wyndham had never shared her favorite's dislike to Mrs. Gifford, and she received her visitor cordially.

She was quite willing to let the conversation be led round to the Esdailes and Leigh's Hollow. She was going there herself the first week in August, they were to give the usual ball during the second week.

"The usual ball?" exclaimed Blanche, smiling. "I suppose the grand entry of the bride into county society?"

"Exactly—in all the war paint and feathers," said Mabel, laughing—"which means the 'King's rubies.'"

"Oh, of course—such wonderful heirlooms! But what a risk, the getting them down and taking them up! And really one is afraid. Did you hear of that burglary at Lord Dampier's?"

"You mean after their farewell ball? Yes; Ted told me all about it. They were talking of it at the clubs. The police think it is the work of a gang they call the 'Invincibles.' Isn't it odd they can't lay hold of these people? They are so clever and secret! It's really awful to think of! Every bit of plate gone from Lord Dampier's house; and you know how valuable it is. You have dined there—haven't you?"

"Yes," answered Blanche. "Dear Lady Dampier is always so kind! I noticed the plate, it being so handsome; and of course I knew it must be of value; but I didn't hear that it had all gone. I wrote to the Dampiers, condoling with them—I hadn't time to call. Why is this gang called the 'Invincibles'?"

"They say only one of them has ever been caught. I suppose they all will be captured in the end. By-the-bye, do you remember how Mrs. Davenant lost her diamond pendants in such a mysterious way? I wonder if it was this same gang!"

"Possibly," said Blanche. "Did she ever get them back again? I always fancy it was one of the servants."

"I don't know," demurred Mabel; "it was very odd. They were worth a heap of money; and those Davenants are not too well off. I shall tell Esdaile to be extra careful."

"My dear Lady Wyndham, I shouldn't think any thieves would take such well-known jewels. They would have to send them abroad — wouldn't they? They couldn't risk selling them in England; and of course Mr. Esdaile would have a safe for them or some such precaution."

"I think there is one in his dressing room," said Lady Windham. "Yes, of course there is! His mother used to keep her everyday jewels there."

"It would be much more convenient to Teresa to have them in her own room," observed Blanche, "unless he thinks they are safer in his dressing room."

"That's it. The safe was used by Esdaile's father for papers, and so on; but, when he died, Derek made his mother keep her trinkets there; he said he didn't like the idea of some burglars attempting to enter her room when she might be there. It's a splendid safe; impossible to open!"

"I thought," said Blanche, smiling, "no safe was really impregnable. I suppose, however I could be of no use in sending the rubies? I shall be in town a week or two on business."

"Thanks! I think Derek will probably fetch the jewels himself; I know he said something about it. And where are you going when you do get away? How very tiresome to be kept in town! It is so dull in August!"

"Yes—so it is. I had one or two invitations, but I was obliged to decline them for this business—some hitch with my trustees."

Mrs. Gifford presently took her leave, saying that she had other calls to make on departing friends.

"Esdaile is carrying out his decision about that poor thing," thought Mabel, when her visitor had left. "She has evidently had no invitation to Leigh's Hollow; and I rather think she came to see if I knew the reason why she has not. How she does struggle, to be sure! I am afraid, if the Esdailes drop her, she will only just keep her feet."

Blanche Gifford had substantially the same thoughts as she drove to one or two houses, and did not call, but only left cards. She wanted to be by herself, in order that she might reflect upon her present position. Was it social extinction she had to face?

She asked herself the question, sitting in her own room after having given a strict "Not at home" order. She was under no restraints now, and she sat in an attitude that suggested lack of training.

She had made headway; her deficiencies were overlooked by many; she permitted herself to be made use of, to fill up unexpected gaps at table; she altered her hours and days to suit this and that great personage; she refused to notice slights, accepted patronage, and fulfilled all kinds of commissions, generally of a disagreeable nature.

Decidedly she had her place in the world of society, and she had climbed to it partly by Derek Esdaile's countenance. Could he, by withdrawing that countenance, fling her down?

He was, after all, simply a gentleman of large means, with no higher status than hundreds of others. Even supposing that he could cast her out of his immediate circle, there were other circles of society which knew little about him, and cared less. She could find her place there.

But there was a heavy cloud on her face, even when she had reached this point, as if her own reasoning did not satisfy her. For once she spoke aloud, clenching her hands savagely.

"I never have been conquered—I never will be!" she exclaimed. "I've made a mistake, and I'm going to retrieve it. That child is either wax in his hands, or she holds similar views to his. He has been fool enough to think he can do as he likes with me! He doesn't know me! I never missed one way but I found another. So now to dine, then dress and go out!"

* * * * * *

The time speedily arrived when Teresa was to receive most of the guests forming her first house party. She scarcely knew whether she was glad or sorry.

There would be an end to the delightful solitude of two—the walks and rides, the drives to distant hospitalities, the talks in the gloaming, the wanderings in the moonlight gardens, the long happy hours on the river.

But these things would come again, and be all the sweeter for the break. In the meantime she liked having friends and making them happy; she was going to show Derek what a good hostess she could be, and force objectors to see that he had made no mistake in marrying a nobody.

She had been again to see Alice Winn, but the girl had made no confidences. It scarcely needed any confession however to tell Teresa that Derek had been right, and that Alice, cheerful and bright though she was, had some secret trouble.

A lover, of course, Teresa decided, Alice being a pretty girl and sure to have sweethearts. But she did not seem at all like the ordinary village girl; she was quiet and self-restrained, and one could not imagine her at any time to have smiled on first one, then on another, and having no heart for any one.

Teresa looked in at the cottage the day before her guests were to arrive. She should have so little time, she said laughingly, as Alice placed her a chair, when the people came.

Alice said it was very kind of Mrs. Esdaile to come at all, and knitted industriously while Teresa sat in the wide window-seat and both talked. They were in the kitchen, which had quite an Arcadian look, the open door and the lattice casement covered with roses, and everything as spotless as a drawing-room.

Alice had some good news to tell her visitor. There was a piece of garden ground across the road, which her father had wished to have but could not afford to rent, and now the bailiff had told him that he could have it thrown in with the cottage.

Teresa knew who had brought this about, and she felt her heart throb with pleasure. Just a wish of hers—just a coaxing word, and the thing was done. She turned her head aside to conceal her smile and flush of gladness.

"Mr. Esdaile must have said something to the bailiff, ma'am," said Alice; "and father is so very grateful; he can make a deal out of that ground, with the fruit trees on it and all. You don't know the difference it will make!"

"Yes, I do," said Teresa, gently. "I have been poor myself."

She would not have said as much to anyone else but this girl, with her fine old-fashioned notions.

"I am very glad, indeed," she said.

"Father will thank the master himself," said Alice; "but, till he can, will you please to tell him how obliged we are? It's those things make Mr. Esdaile such a favorite, ma'am, and the way he does them. And he doesn't like one to say much. But he won't mind thanks coming through you."

The girl was smiling, and Teresa looked at her with sparkling eyes. This praise of her husband was sweet indeed.

But, when she did give the message to Esdaile, he disclaimed any merit. It was not his doing, he said. He only obeyed orders; and he should take care the Winns knew that.

"Well, if you won't let them thank you, you will not refuse my own especial thanks," said Teresa, because it's all nonsense your saying, it's my work. I only suggested, and you did it for me—just to please me"—softly, with her arm over his shoulder as she stood by his chair and her face laid against his.

Esdaile, when he told his bailiff his wishes about the plot of ground, had before his mental vision a haggard face and agonized eyes, and he saw them again now as he drew the little hand over his shoulder to his lips.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE Wyndhams were the first guests to arrive at Leigh's Hollow; by the time tea was brought into the drawing room all the house-party had assembled.

At breakfast-time Teresa had confessed laughingly that she was nervous; but she did not show any nervousness when the actual ordeal came.

She was happily free from self consciousness; she did her best, and never wondered what other people were thinking of her, though she knew she would be an object of special criticism, friendly and perhaps unfriendly.

She cared for only one opinion—and she knew what that was. Lady Wyndham, reclining on a most luxurious couch, every one ready to wait upon her, watched the girl quietly. Presently she beckoned Esdaile, who had been looking after a pretty young cousin of his. He came up at once, and sat down by Lady Wyndham.

"Flirting, Derek, before your wife?" said Mabel reproachfully. "I thought better things of you!"

"Sissie and I always flirted," replied Esdaile, unmoved, "from the time of short frocks and knickerbockers. Shall I fetch you some more tea, or did you want to suggest something for to morrow?"

"Neither. I want to tell you Teresa is a born hostess, and you'll never have your invitations refused. I mean to come pretty often. We shall have a delightful time!"

"I hope you will. I thought myself she was doing very well; but your opinion is worth more than mine."

"Not to her," said Lady Wyndham, smiling. "She'll ask you presently what you think——"

"Oh, she knows! But I shall tell her your good opinion, nevertheless. I'm glad you've changed your mind."

"What do you mean, you bad fellow? I always said she would be a queen of society."

"Why didn't you tell me so, then, instead of reminding me that she had no position?" demanded Esdaile, with a smile which almost disconcerted Mabel.

"The idea of bringing that up against me," she said, "when it was all out of friendship for you; and I didn't know her in the least!"

"Forgive!" pleaded Esdaile, with mock penitence. "Do let me get you some tea to make amends! And I'd much rather dance attendance on you than even on Sissie."

"Fickle!" exclaimed Mabel, shaking her head. "I don't want any more tea, and you can make amends by telling me about the ball. When will it be?"

"A wind-up—the night before we break up," replied Esdaile.

"That will be nearly a fortnight hence. Is Teresa afraid?"

"A little, I think. It's rather an ordeal, poor child; but I told her you'd help her."

"Of course!" said Mabel warmly.

"Thanks! What an angel you are!" said Esdaile in a soft tone. "I'm afraid Mrs. Gifford would like to have filled that role. Has she left town?"

"No. She called on me before I left, and said she would be obliged to remain for a while, so, if you fetch the rubies yourself, avoid her."

"I think I know how to get rid of people by this time," said Derek, laughingly—"even a lady; besides, very likely I shall send my man. I'd trust him as I would myself. A propos, I'm giving Teresa her dress——"

"And you've told her to spare no money, I know," said Lady Wyndham, "extravagant that you are! I don't think however the costliest dress can make her look lovelier than she does now. Certainly happiness is a beautifier. Don't you forget that, Derek!"

"Is that a serious warning?" inquired Esdaile, rising as Teresa came towards to them.

Mabel shook her head.

"Ah—then I am relieved!" he said. "What is it, Teresita? Do you want me?"

"You can come too, if you like," said Teresa. "We are all going into the garden; and I thought Lady Windham would like to come too—unless you are tired?" turning to Mabel affectionately. "But Derek shall find you a nice place near the house, if you are."

"Hasn't Teresa quickly learned the art of disposing of me?" said Esdaile, laughing. "And am I not meek?"

"You ought to be doubly happy at being so disposed of," said Mabel.

"So I am; but you're too old a friend to need telling that; and Teresita knows"—with a glance at his wife as he led Mabel away.

The days flew all too quickly, and the house party had decided that the new hostess was an acquisition.

Sissie, who had had a sensational leaning towards her cousin, fell in love with her supplanter. The men, of course, were devoted to Teresa, who notwithstanding this sudden popularity, maintained her simple charm of manner.

She seemed such a mere girl, always ready for some fun, and yet gave her impress to her household as if she had ruled a large establishment for years.

It was the most free-and-easy house to stay in; people did very much as they liked, and the guidance of host and hostess, that kept things together and made everything go smoothly, was scarcely seen. The informality of the daily life rather scandalised the prim dwellers in the country, who discussed the Leigh's Hollow doings from morning till night. It was those deplorable professional ways; it had not been like that in the late Mrs. Esdaile's time.

But it was only to be expected when her son took to going so much into professional society; and of course he married into it.

But the detractors were all terribly eager for invitations to the Manor, especially to the ball. They crowded the schoolroom when Teresa was to sing for some local charity: they were always glad to tell one another when they had secured one of her sunny smiles of greeting as she passed them, though they declared that these smiles were too indiscriminately bestowed.

At last that bright fortnight came to a close.

One day before the ball Harris, the valet, was sent up to the bankers in town for the rubies, and returned in the afternoon. He brought the jewels at once to his master, as ordered. They were in a chased silver casket of Indian workmanship, which Harris had carried in an ordinary black leather bag.

"Get on all right?" inquired Esdaile, as the man came in.

"Yes, sir. I went and came in a cab as you ordered, and had a compartment to myself coming down. I noticed no one about the station—either here or in town—who looked at all suspicious, and no one about the roads either. I haven't heard of any strangers at all in the neighborhood."

"Oh, no!" said Esdaile. "Why should there be? It's pretty well known the safe isn't easy to open, and that I keep loaded firearms. Thanks, Harris! Now will you find your mistress, and ask her to come to me upstairs? I think she's on the tennis lawn. If she is playing, don't send her."

The man went out, and Esdaile carried the casket up to his dressing-room. While he waited for Teresa he unlocked the safe—a small one—which looked like a handsome carved cabinet, with the back built into the wall. Here were habitually kept the jewels that were in ordinary use—fine ones, but of no extraordinary value.

Presently Teresa came running lightly up-stairs; she entered the room with her golden hair waving picturesquely and her faint color deepened. Her racket was still in her hand, and she threw it down as she said breathlessly—

"Do you want me, Derek? Is it the rubies? I do so want to see them! We had just finished when Harris came."

Esdaile turned from the cabinet, and looked at his young wife with a vivid appreciation of her beauty—as if he saw a new loveliness in her face. She flushed more deeply as she met his glance; but she smiled too, and her heart throbbed as he took her hand and drew her towards him.

"Teresita, are you very happy?" he said softly, pushing back her bright hair with a fond clinging touch. The girl involuntarily moved nearer to him, and he put his arm about her.

They remembered it afterwards—how for a few moments they stood so in silence, she nestling close to him, and he passing his hand over her hair and sometimes putting his lips to it. At last he whispered—

"You took my breath away when you came in. I am half afraid; only you trust me, my own darling!"

She sighed as if her heart were too full; but she did not answer him.

"After to-morrow," he said, still stroking her hair, "we shall be alone again. Shall you like that, dearest?"

"I'm always happiest with you," she replied, raising her dark tender eyes to his.

"And I with you," Esdaile said, very

softly. Then, releasing her and assuming a lighter tone, he went on: "But making love to you isn't looking at the rubies. Come and admire them. You mustn't try them on now, though; you must wear them for the first time to-morrow night. I shall put them on for you myself."

He led her to the table where the casket stood and opened it. There lay the famous rubies—a blood-red coil on soft white velvet, flashing and scintillating in a thousand glorious changing rays as the girl slowly lifted it and moved it this way and that for the mere pleasure of seeing the shifting hues.

Esdaile, standing where he could see her face, and watching her with a half tender smile on his lips, knew very well what was in her mind as she took up ear-drops and bracelets and looked at them with the same grave earnestness.

She displayed very little of the ordinary feminine rapture over the jewels; she was not thinking how they would enhance her beauty, but only of their own splendor and that story about them.

She was traveling back through the long ages since they had been dug out of the mines, and thinking of the traditions that had gathered about them making their history; they seemed like living things to her as they lay in her hands.

Once on the shrine of a god, a gift of faith or love, to-day they were given to her as she stood at the threshold of life, fearless of all it might bring. As her thoughts took this turn the jewels fell from her fingers back to their resting place; their red glitter had grown dim, and she was hiding her tears on her husband's breast.

Tears without pain! The man, holding her in his arms, prayed she might never shed more bitter tears than these. Teresa raised her head with a smile on her quivering lips. Esdaile stooped and kissed her.

"Now let me put the jewels away for you," he said, "and we will go downstairs."

The casket was locked in the safe, the key of which was kept in a place to which only Esdaile and Teresa had access. Then husband and wife rejoined their guests.

Dinner that night was even more lively than usual. There was only the house party; and the ball formed a prominent topic of conversation, much fun passing about the securing of dances.

"No—I won't promise any more," said Teresa to Lord Wyndham, as she inclined her head to the ladies, who rose. Ted sprang up to open the door.

"You mustn't be keeping more than two dances for Esdaile," he said in a low tone to Teresa as she passed him. "Tisn't fair."

"Never mind how many I'm keeping," she replied, laughing; "you'll know to-morrow night."

Ted shut the door and went back to his place. There was silence among the men; Esdaile was reading a telegram, while a footman stood waiting.

"What's the matter?" inquired Wyndham.

Esdaile looked paler than usual, but answered quietly—

"Will you excuse me? Ted, take my place. This from an old college friend of mine at Winston; he is ill—they fear dying." He had risen while he spoke and turned to the servant. "Tell them to bring round the dog-cart in half an hour," he said. "There's no train to Winston till nine."

The men present eagerly expressed their sympathy. Esdaile, thanking them, left the room, and, crossing the hall, opened the drawing-room door.

"Teresa!" he said.

Teresa, who had been looking at some engravings with Bessie, excused herself and flew to the door.

"Don't be frightened," said Esdaile, smiling and drawing her into the hall—"only a few hours' absence! Come to my study and I'll tell you. I don't think you know the name," he continued, when they had reached the study—"a man who was at Christ Church with me—Borrodaile—he is dying, and wants to see me; his friends telegraphed."

"Where does she live?" inquired Teresa. "Of course you must go!"—putting her hand in her husband's. "I am so sorry, Derek! Was he a great friend of yours?"

"I liked him well enough; the friendship mostly on his side. But it always shocks one—a summons like this—a man one has known." He was clasping the tender little hand with unconscious force. "I can't get back to-night, dearest; the Borrodailes live at Winston."

"But to-morrow—you'll be back then?" she said anxiously.

"Without fail, and as early as I can. I'll have those rubies put elsewhere to-night, as you'll be alone. Harris shall take charge of them."

"But why move the rubies? No one knows they are there."

"I shall feel easier; and, if any one did come," said Esdaile smiling, "they would only get the trumpery jewels, even if they could force the safe. Wait for me here while I get ready; I want you to myself when I say 'Good-bye.'"

Teresa smiled faintly—she did not like his going, and she was rather dismayed at having to entertain her guests without his help.

She thought she could manage it however, and she gained courage as she sat waiting, resolving not to make Derek feel it hard to leave her.

Directly she heard his hand upon the door she went towards him, smiling to hide the pain that seemed so foolish; and yet she could not suppress it.

"I have settled with Harris about the rubies," said Esdaile. "It's all right. You are not nervous at being alone, are you? Ted's room is near, and Marsh isn't far off."

"I shall not be in the least nervous," she declared. "It is you who are nervous. What is to happen? I would have Annie in my room if I were afraid."

"I dare say I am fanciful," he said, smiling. "Come and say 'Good-bye,' my child! The dog cart will be up in a minute."

Teresa clung to him in her usual loving way as Derek pressed her to his breast. He blamed himself for feeling reluctant to go; he thought he was selfish and unworthy of this pure love of hers if he let it spoil him and make him unwilling to give her up for even so short a time.

"Derek, you must go—you'll be too late! I mustn't keep you," she said, gently pushing him away from her. "Don't think of me. I'm glad for you to go; it's only a few hours. There is the dog cart ——"

"Yes—I'll go; but another kiss first!" Esdaile drew her into a still closer embrace; once raised his head and released her, turning to the door.

Teresa ran after him, putting her hand in his, and so went with him to the hall-door. The groom was waiting at the horse's head, Harris was coming up the steps to tell his master the dog-cart was waiting.

There was only time for a hurried pressure of her hand, and the next moment Esdaile was in his seat. He turned his head as he drove off; the slight figure was still standing framed by the dark oak doorway, and thrown into relief by the brilliant light within the house.

She kissed her hand to him, and once again, just before he swept out by the lodge-gates, he glanced back; but the trees of the avenue shut her out; it was all darkness behind him. He sighed and half smiled; there was the meeting to-morrow.

In the drawing-room every one regretted Esdaile's absence; but the music and conversation went on as usual, Teresa never flagging, and ably seconded by Ted, who for the time was host.

"We mustn't be late to-night," said the young mistress of the house when eleven chimed from the hall and the staircase, and then rang out from the church clock in the village. She was at the piano, and somebody begged for another song.

"Just one," she agreed, and sang a German Lied—an exquisite simple thing that made every one silent.

Then came "Good night," and Teresa, appealing to the men in general, said:—

"Don't be very late in the smoking room. Ted, please will you see to it? Nobody must be tired at my ball."

Ted laughed and promised.

"We shan't care to be late," he said; "it isn't half the fun without Esdaile."

The ladies went up stairs, chatting and laughing. They stopped talking in the corridor for some minutes; then Teresa cried merrily:—

"But where is our beauty sleep? Good night, all!" and flitted away into her own room, which was brightly lighted up, and with the windows open. But how blank it looked, and how silent it was!

The girl went to the window and sat down, with a wistful longing in her heart. It was of no use listening for a footstep, watching for a presence; there would be no chat over the day's doings or lingering side by side to drink in the beauty of the still dark night.

But he was with her in spirit as she was with him, and it was only a little while. A few hours—no more—and she would wake to the glad thought that he was coming.

CHAPTER XV.

BEING uncertain as to the time at which he would return, Esdaile had arranged that no trap was to be sent to the station for him; he would walk the two miles. He found that he was able to catch the first train from Winston, which left about half-past eight, and he reached home at about ten.

The hall-door, as usual, stood wide open. He had almost expected to see Teresa on the threshold, eager to be the first to welcome him; but there seemed to be no one about. He entered the great hall, and had just put down his hat and gloves, when the inner door leading to the house opened, and Mabel came out with a scared face.

"Oh, Derek, is that you?" she cried. "So soon!"

Esdaile looked surprised, and then concerned. He went up to her and took her hand.

"I was going to say that's an odd welcome," he said; "but something seems the matter. You are trembling, Mabel. What is it? Where is Ted?"

"He's here. Ted!" she called. "Ted! Come! He is here!"

Lord Wyndham came hurriedly across the hall, and behind him Harris. Esdaile looked apprehensively from one to the other.

"What's the matter?" he exclaimed. "Is anyone ill? Teresa? Ted! Harris! Why don't you answer?"

"Derek," said Mabel, looking up at him and holding his hand tenderly, "we are afraid something has happened. Harris has just told us. Yes—to Teresa."

"Good heavens! But what? Where is she? I will go to her!" exclaimed Esdaile. "Don't keep me, Mabel!" Then, in despair, as she held him fast, he said, "If someone would only tell me! But you are all dumb! Harris——"

"We can't find her, sir," said the man. "I thought her ladyship was going to tell you——"

"Can't find her! What do you mean by such folly?" exclaimed Esdaile, sternly. "I'll find her directly. Is that all you mean?"

"Esdaile, just listen," interposed Windham, trying to speak quietly. "There is serious cause for alarm. Teresa is not in her room—didn't sleep there last night—at least, the bed has not been touched. The boathouse——"

Esdaile was standing as if he were stunned, looking deathly pale and rigid. He no longer sought to free himself; he let his hands lie passive in Mabel's, and turned from Ted to Harris with a look of anguish.

"Go on!" he said.

Ted glanced aside at Harris, and the man, obeying the look, took up the story. It seemed that breakfast had been later than usual, and Teresa had not appeared, as was her custom, among the earlier risers.

Mabel had inquired whether she was out or breakfasted in her own room. The servant brought the message from Annie, the maid, that Mrs. Esdaile had not rung for her that morning, which meant that her mistress had gone out early.

Breakfast had then proceeded, and was nearly over, when Harris called Lord Windham out of the room. Here the man paused for a few moments, and his master said quietly:—

"Sit down, Harris." Then he turned silently to Ted.

"Harris had been down to the boat house," explained Wyndham, "to see if Teresa had gone on the river. He found her own boat there, but the dinghey was gone—the one the servants used. None of them had taken it."

"Who had unlocked the boat house?" inquired Esdaile. "The man in charge?"

"No one unlocked it. Harris found the door broken open."

"And the brooch, sir," said the man, starting up—"this brooch—I found at the water's edge." He put the trinket in his master's hand and turned away.

Esdaile, stepping back from Mabel, looked at the little horseshoe of gold and pearls—a dainty gift of his to his betrothed, which she had worn daily. But no sound passed his lips, which only quivered in pain, as if his servant's grief hurt him.

"You found it—near the water's edge?" he faltered, after a long silence.

"Yes," answered Ted.

"But she couldn't manage the dinghey—some one must have—broken in." He reeled suddenly. "The 'king's rubies!'"

Ted sprang to him, and for a moment Esdaile leaned against him; then he slowly recovered himself, and said quietly—

"I am going upstairs. Has any one been?"

"Not since Annie went up," replied Ted. "We have made no examination; we were just about to do so."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Bric-a-Brac.

DOMESTIC SCIENCE.—In Germany there are schools of domestic science where every detail of housekeeping is thoroughly taught to the girl pupils, and no diploma is issued until the girl has proved herself an expert.

SWEDISH DOCTORS.—In Sweden doctors never send bills to their patients, the amount of remuneration being left entirely to the latter's generosity. The rich however, pay their doctor very liberally, when once he has been retained by them, whether they have need of his services or not. From the poor he receives only small sums, and from the very poor, nothing. Yet to his great credit be it said the Swedish doctor visits the poorest of his patients as faithfully and constantly as his richest.

SWALLOWS.—One of the traditions which the early Romans cherished as to swallows was that they were the spirits of dead children revisiting their homes, and therefore the birds were treated with love and reverence. The swallow is still, if not a sacred, at least an honored bird in different parts of the world. It is the "bird of consolation" in the North. They style it in the South "the bird of the happy beak." It is greeted as the "bird of the hearth" in the West; and, when it flies to the East, the advent of the "bird of God" is announced.

CHEESE-RICH.—In Valois, Switzerland, a man's riches, it is said, are estimated according to the number of cheeses he owns. By a "cheese-rich" man is meant one as wealthy as Crœsus. Said one Valois boy to a companion, "My father is a cheese-rich man." "How many cheeses has he?" said the other. "Oh, at least so many, for we have just made a lot!" "Call him cheese-rich," said the other, smiling contemptuously—"why, my father has that number the year round, and some of ours are a hundred years old!"

A STUDENT OF SOLOMON.—Robert Fergusson, the unhappy Scottish poet so greatly admired by Burns, was a delicate child, and, perhaps for that reason, very fond of books. His chief delight was to read the Bible, and especially the Proverbs of Solomon. This early study caused him to take what he read very seriously to heart. One day little Bob ran into his mother's room, and with tears in his eyes cried out to her to whip him. She asked him what was wrong, and to her amazement, he replied with the utmost earnestness—"Oh, mother! 'he that spareth the rod hateth his son.'"

A PARIS WEDDING.—A very funny wedding was recently celebrated in a village near Paris. The bride was forty-six years of age, and the bride-groom only twenty-two. The bridal procession was formed at eight o'clock in the evening and was led by a man riding a camel, a fiddler followed him seated on a donkey, the rest of the guests riding similar animals. In the only carriage rode the bride-groom's mother, who was only two years older than his wife. Great amusement was caused by this grotesque procession amongst the villagers, who accompanied it, carrying colored lanterns, and beating a wild tattoo upon the pots and frying pans and kettles.

THROWING RICE.—It is said that the custom of throwing rice at brides and bride-grooms upon their departure for their honeymoon is going out of fashion. Bowls filled with rose-leaves and orange blossoms have at several wedding recently been handed to the bridesmaids and groomsmen, and the various happy pairs at whose weddings the innovation has taken place have gone to their carriage under a shower of fragrant pellets. The idea is certainly a pretty one, and much kinder in its effects than the biting rice, which frequently finds its way, quite unintentionally on the part of the throwers, into the eyes of the wedded couple.

WITH A HUMAN FACE.—One of the most singular looking creatures that ever walked the earth or swam the "waters under the earth," is the world-famed man-faced crab of Japan. Its body is hardly an inch in length, yet the head is fitted with a face which is an exact counterpart of that of a Chinese coolie—a veritable missing link, with eyes, nose and mouth all clearly defined. This curious and uncanny creature, besides the great likeness it bears to a human being in the face, is provided with two legs, which seem to grow from the top of its head and hang down over the sides of the face. Besides these legs, two feelers, each about an inch in length, grow from the chin of the animal, looking like a forked beard. These man-faced crabs swarm in the inland seas of Japan.

DOROTHY'S PICTURE.

BY O. W. H.

Long years ago she lived, this maid,
In days of hoop and quaint flower'd gown;
Strange patches decked her youthful cheek
And powder hid her locks of brown.
Her picture shows a dainty form,
Her face a flower of pink and white;
Both dimpled hands and apron filled
With cowslip-blossoms fresh and bright.

No doubt she sang among her flowers,
The sweet old songs we now forget,
And glided often through the maze
Of country dance or minuet.
She was not learned, the Dorothy,
Except in arts of housewife's skill;
The silken blossoms that she worked
On quilt or chair bloom gaily still.

A simple life—to tend the bees
And flowers, to visit still-room, farm,
To watch the winter snows beside
The wood-fire's glow so bright and warm.
She never married, though they say
That she was rich, and lovely, too,
With all her stately old-world grace,
With smiling lips and eyes of blue.

Was there, I wonder, some romance—
Some secret sorrow proudly hid,
Some withered hope, at rest at last
With her beneath the coffin-lid?
The pictured eyes are sad though sweet,
The red lips mournful. It may be
Some true heart died for her dear sake—
This lovely long-dead Dorothy!

MARRED BY FATE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "GLORY'S LOVERS," "AN ARCH-IMPOSTOR," "HUSHED UP!" "A LOVER FROM OVER THE SEA," ETC."

CHAPTER XXI.—(CONCLUDED.)

HE lit his cigarette.

"My dear Deb, no novelist who ever lived or ever will succeeded in hitting upon a plot, a plan, more strange and improbable than that which has been actually conceived and carried through in real life.

"Truth is stranger than fiction; things that occur every day, more far-fetched than even a novelist ever imagined. Now, let us see where this danger of discovery comes in. It will trouble you to point out a flaw.

"Who will detect us? The registrar? Not he. I have fixed upon an oldish man who wears spectacles. He runs an office just outside Brompton. He probably never heard of Ravenhurst, most improbably ever saw him; and, if he has, all the better, seeing that my make-up deceives even you. And there's no one else to see us! I take a cab from the lodgings I shall rent for a week, and, after the marriage, go back in a cab—a four-wheeler, of course. Who's to see me?"

"There's there's Bruce himself," she said, in a low, agitated voice. "He will be able to prove that he was somewhere else at the very time of the—the marriage."

"I think not," he said, "I will arrange that. I have planned out how to get him out of the way for the day. He has a horse at Elford, and I am going down with him. I shall get him down there, and leave him in the lurch at the last moment. That's enough for you without details. Besides you are only to declare yourself his widow, remember."

She shuddered.

"If he—he doesn't die, if nothing happens to him?" she said in a low voice.

"Then we are just where we were," he replied. "Neither you nor I, for the best of reasons, will say anything about the marriage. But I've a notion that something will happen to Ravenhurst——"

She shrank back, and eyed him with suspicious horror.

"Tut!" he said, with a laugh; "you look at me as if I meant to murder him."

"You're capable of it;" she said, below her breath.

"Oh, no! I stop short at murder," he retorted, coolly. "What I mean is, that the odds are against his coming back safe and sound. First there's the chances in a scrimmage; then there's the fever, and he'll probably be wilder than ever when he gets over there; then there are all sorts of accidents to depend upon. In fact, Deb—you'll think me superstitious—but I have a presentiment that Ravenhurst will never return."

"It is as bad as murder," she murmured.

"Nonsense!" he said blandly. It's suicide, at the worst. And, come to think of it, even if he did return to England, he would find it deuced hard to prove that he was not the man who married you—not that we'll bluff it quite to that extent—for, see here, Deb, I have not forgotten a link in the chain. This deed of gift is going to help us."

"How?" she asked. "Oh, for mercy's sake, go and take these things off, she broke out almost desperately. "I can't bear it any longer. Every time I look at you, I think it must be Bruce, and then your own voice—coming from his face drives me silly."

"All right," he said, with a laugh, as he got up and went into the other room When he had gone, she rose, unsteadily, stretched her arms above her head, drew a long breath, and then, filling a glass with champagne, drank it off.

"That's better," he said, when he returned in his own character. "There's some color in your face now, and you look your old self. Now light a cigarette"—he tossed her his silver case—"and let's talk the matter over sensibly. What was I saying? Oh, the deed." He touched the pocket in which he had placed it. "It is not signed yet. It never will be."

She looked at him sharply, suspiciously.

"What do you mean by that? No, I'll have that, at any rate!" she said.

He smiled.

"You'll have something better, my dear Deb. See here; you must get Ravenhurst to come here to sign the deed."

"He won't."

"Oh, yes, he will. He mightn't if he had been still engaged to that other girl, but he isn't, and he's desperate, and will do anything or go anywhere just at present. Get him to come here; say you don't like going to his lawyers; write him a pretty, pathetic letter note, the sort of thing a deserted woman always writes. Understand?"

"Well?" she asked sullenly.

"When he comes, get him to read over the deed, while you get the pen and ink. Then, just before he is going to sign, you must distract his attention and slip another paper in its place. You can manage it all right. Trust you for that."

"I might," she said, moodily. "And what for? Will the other deed give me more money?"

"A very great deal," he said; with a touch of contempt for her obtuseness, in his tone. "Don't you see? The other deed will be a marriage settlement! When the time comes to claim your rights, there will be that to back up your other proofs. He wouldn't be likely to make a marriage settlement, if he wasn't going to marry you. See, Deb?"

"Yes; you are a devil!" she said in a low voice.

He laughed.

"It comes fresh and strange to you," he said, "but I've thought it all out, and it doesn't seem so wonderful to me. The whole affair, barring the disposal of Ravenhurst for the day of the marriage, is childishly easy, and it's just its simplicity which, like one of your sex, is so charming."

She was silent for a moment, then she looked at him keenly.

"What I want to know is, where do you come in?" she said, slowly. Why do you want this done? Why do you take all the trouble and run the risk—for you do run some risk."

"Rather," he said. "Nearly all."

"Then why do you do it?" she repeated. "What are you going to get for it?"

"Penal servitude, if I'm found out," he replied; then after a pause, he looked at the tip of his cigarette with a reflective smile.

"That's a very sensible question, Deb, and shows that you've got your wits about you. But it is rather a hard one to answer, and I'm half afraid you won't understand me. As to what I'm going to get, not money, Deb. For one thing, I don't want it; I'm not so badly off as to depend upon a plan of this kind for coof. I'm not going to get money, Deb, but I'm going to get what is sweeter—revenge."

"Revenge? What has he ever done that you should want revenge?"

"Well, it's rather difficult to explain, Deb. You know Ravenhurst, and you know how he and his sort can behave to a man they think beneath them; they are never rude, they are never even discourteous; but they are worse than that. By word and look they show that they think themselves your superior, that you are not fit to shake hands with them, sit at the same table with them, scarcely breathe the same air with them.

"Their eyes look cold and like glass when they look at you; their voices stiffen and harden when they speak to you; as if they said, 'Don't forget your place. If we do condescend to let you move in our society, remember you are on sufferance; that you are different to us; we are porcelain, you are common paste.

"We are of the blue blood, you are from the gutter. You may look and behave as we do, may be as well mannered, as well or better dressed, may have tastes as refined as ours; but we don't forget that you were not born to them, but only acquired them; in short, that you are not a gentleman, and we don't intend that you shall forget it either."

He paused. His face was pale, his eyes were fixed on vacancy, his lips were twisted in their peculiar fashion, and his thin nostrils were distended; his face and voice were those of a man brooding over a long-suffered wrong, a course of bitter insult, wrong and insult which he now saw a way to avenge.

Deborah looked at him half amazed, half-fascinated by his expression, and the suppressed and mesmeric tones of his voice.

"You hate him," she said in a whisper.

He smiled.

"That covers the whole ground, Deb," he said. "I hate him. He has stabbed me perhaps without knowing it, in my most sensitive part—my self esteem; he has, metaphorically, of course, struck me across the lips, spat upon me, a hundred thousand times.

"He would not condescend to know me at first; and, even now, even now that I have proved myself of service to him, and he would call me his friend, he reminds me, by some word or look, that I am his inferior, that I can never be anything else. I hate him, as a slave hates his master—the dog hates the soft-spoken brute who, with a laugh, kicks him. I would go far—very far—to injure, not only him, but his. And I know no way of injuring them more than this."

He had spoken the last words rather to himself than to her, and the blood rushed to her face for the first time.

"You mean that by making him marry me, by making me Lady Ravenhurst, you injure them worse than any other way?" she said, between her teeth.

He smiled.

"I beg your pardon, my dear Deb. But, speaking bluntly, that is what I do mean. I fancy I can see the face of that proud, haughty, old earl, the father, when you declared yourself——" He laughed. "And the horror of the whole family at the mere idea of such a mesalliance!"

"I won't do it!"

He looked at her easily.

"Oh yes, you will."

"I won't! What has he ever done to me—he or those belonging to him—that I should injure them, as you say this will! That's enough, Glave! I've done with this business. I didn't like it from the first, and—and—I won't have anything to do with it."

"I think you will—I am sure you will, my dear Deborah," he said, blandly.

"What's to prevent me from telling him all you've told me, splitting on your precious plan?" she demanded defiantly.

He lit another cigarette before replying, then he said slowly, and with the same smile.

"The fact, that if you were to do so, I should be under the painful necessity of informing Lord Ravenhurst of certain little incidents in your life since he made your acquaintance, little incidents that would show him that he would be worse than a fool to settle any money"—he tapped the deed—"upon a woman who had deceived him right away from the beginning."

Her face paled, and her teeth come together with a click.

"You beast!" she muttered, furiously.

"My dear Deb. I'm nothing of the kind. I am only a man who is showing a friend the way to fortune. If I have my own little interest to serve at the same time—why, so has everybody. Don't be a fool! Stretch out your hand and take the good things the gods send you; open your mouth, and catch the juicy plum which is ready to drop into it!

"Don't worry yourself about anything, but leave it all to me. You have to do just as I tell you. It's like playing a part in a little comedy, and you can manage it very nicely, especially if I am in the cast with you, and on the stage by our side all the time. And think of the reward! Fancy yourself a viscountess; a possible Countess of Clansmere! Think of it my dear Deb, and don't be a fool! Come, what do you say?"

He rose and stood over her, his pale eyes smiling half mockingly, into hers. She tried to meet them with a defiant refusal, but her bold, handsome eyes dropped, her mouth twitched, and her color came and went.

"If I must, I must," she said, huskily. "I'm in your power."

"My dear Deb, how coarsely you put it!" he said, with a shocked air; but his smile deepened, and his lips twitched.

"I'm in your power—I know that—and—and I'll do it."

CHAPTER XXII.

THERE is an old-fashioned complaint, which, indeed, is so old-fashioned, as to be considered by some quite extinct. But it is still extant, though not so frequent as of old. It is called love sickness—and Jess had it.

She grew pale—so pale that the ordinary ivory white of her complexion became of a transparent hue; her eyes seemed to grow larger—there were depths of unspoken suffering in them, and dark shadows under them, which were painted by the hand of that grimly earnest artist, Insomnia.

She had always been slim, but she gradually grew so thin that her clothes—the pretty "swell" clothes of which Janet was so proud—became ridiculously large.

She looked so ethereal, so sad, and withal so patient, that the people of Ravenhurst, gentle and simple, made up their minds that she was going into a decline, and that they were going to lose her—and, with her, constant supplies of beef tea, blankets, papers, and so on.

Even Mrs. De Ponsonby Brown and the Burgesses were alarmed and exchanged remarks.

Mrs. De Ponsonby Brown declared that all girls with Jess' peculiar complexion and hair were delicate, and given to consumption.

"She reminds me of one of the Spelicans." Nearly everything reminded her of that noble family. "A girl like Jess Newton, with her hair and eyes. She died at Davos. I would recommend Mr. Newton to take her there——"

"What, to die?" inquired Mrs. Burgess, not sarcastically, but anxiously, for she had grown very fond of Jess.

"Oh, no, dear; but to give her a chance. It is the only place in the world that I know of where people with delicate lungs especially girls——"

"I don't believe Jess is in a decline," interrupted Mrs. Burgess. "I shall speak to Mr. Newton about her. She is the dearest, sweetest, most lovable girl——"

"So was Hildegarde Spelican," put in Mrs. De Ponsonby.

"Yes; she is ill, I know that," said Mr. Newton, when Mrs. Burgess plucked up courage to speak to him: and it needed some courage, for Mr. Newton was not easy to approach nowadays. "She is ill. I will send for the doctor. Hitherto she has refused to see him, refused to acknowledge that anything was the matter."

"She—she seems to have something on her mind," ventured Mrs. Burgess, timidly, for even she was timid when dealing with Mr. Newton. "Do you think—forgive me, Mr. Newton, if I seem obtrusive, but I am fond of Jess, and she has no mother. Do you think? It has been since Frank Forde left, that she——"

Mr. Newton set his mouth into the straight line, which served as a danger signal.

"If you suggest that Jess is—regrets Frank Forde's absence, you are quite mistaken," he said gravely. "No, I am not at all offended, and, indeed, I am grateful to you, Mrs. Burgess, for expressing such kindly interest in Jess. I will send for the doctor."

Jess found the doctor there when she returned from her ride that afternoon. She had ridden some distance, and her face was slightly flushed. She looked well when she entered the room, still in her habit, and more than lovely.

The doctor was a young man, an of moderate ability. He thought at first, seeing the flush and the pallor that followed it, that the trouble was consumption; but he found that it wasn't.

"There is nothing the matter with her," he said to Mr. Newton, when Jess had been permitted to go upstairs. "That is, there is nothing organically wrong. She is remarkably sound. You are a strong man, I should say, Mr. Newton."

"I am," said Mr. Newton, curtly.

"Just so, and she has a splendid constitution, evidently. I will send her a tonic, and if that does not prove effectual, I would recommend a change of air."

He sent the tonic, and Jess obediently took it, but it neither brought back the light to her eyes, the flesh to her bones, or the old appetite of which Mr. Newton had been so paternally proud. Consequently

there remained the change of air to try. He thought it out.

It seemed to him that what she wanted was amusement, not another country place in which there would be less to do than in Ravenhurst, and in which she would have more time to brood over her disappointed love affair.

There is only one place in England where you can get amusement easily and in perfection, and that is London.

So, a few days later, Mr. Newton, at breakfast time, looked across at Jess, making pretence with a piece of toast, and said quietly:

"I have some business that will keep me in London for some time, Jess. Would you like to come with me?"

"Why, yes, of course, dear," she replied. "You could not go without me."

"I thought you would," he said. "I have taken a furnished flat in Kensington."

"And when do we go?" said Jess, with a flash of interest which brought joy to to her father's heart.

"To-morrow," he answered calmly. "I have made all preparations, and Janet can pack to-day."

Jess smiled.

"You always do things so quickly, father!"

"Yes," he said. "It is the secret—if there is one—of any success I have had."

Jess went round and said good-bye to her friends that afternoon. As she passed the gates of Ravenhurst Castle she looked at them yearningly and wistfully, and sighed. They went up to London on the morrow, and Jess was delighted with the flat.

It seemed like a house floating in the air, as she stood on the balcony outside the drawing room window, and looked down the fashionable street, in which the carriages were passing, though the season was over; indeed, that shorter and more pleasant season of autumn was already beginning.

The flat was beautifully furnished, for Mr. Newton had given a well-known firm carte blanche, and Jess' rooms were almost as dainty and luxurious as those at the Grange.

Janet, who had never been in London before, was in a fine state of excitement, and tried to rouse her mistress into a similar condition; but, after the first day or two, Jess sank back into her old lethargic indifference.

Mr. Newton kept up his heart. He took her to the theatre on the second night; but, unfortunately, he chose the Lyceum; unfortunately, because they happened to be playing Romeo and Juliet, and Jess heard Bruce speaking all through Romeo's part, and Juliet's sufferings seemed so much like her own that they made her heart ache, and the tears come into her eyes.

Everybody in the house, who could see the box, noticed the exquisitely lovely girl, who looked so ethereal and delicate; and Jess, at last becoming aware of the attention she was attracting, drew back behind the curtain, out of sight.

The next night, Mr. Newton took her to a burlesque. Jess smiled, even laughed now and again; but presently she got tired of it, and she gazed at the stage, without seeing the brilliant crowd, or hearing the clever actors, who were making the house ring with laughter.

Mr. Newton did not give way to despair. Time is the great healer, he reflected, and the time would come when Jess would find it impossible to go to the Gaiety without laughing with the rest.

The horses had been brought up, and Jess went for drives and rides in the Park. There was plenty of room now in the drive, and the Ladies' Mile, and if she enjoyed anything—which is doubtful—she enjoyed her canters over the smooth, soft tan.

One afternoon, as she was riding along, thinking, not of the passers-by, and the loungers on the rail who stared at her, but of the Raven and a certain mossy bank on which two young people had sat and talked of their happy future, a handsome chariot came along the road beside the ride.

An old lady, with white hair, and sad, but patient face, sat in it, and she saw a start of surprise, the pale-faced girl, who sat her handsome horse so well, and yet so listlessly.

Lady Marvelle called to the coachman to stop, and sent a footman to intercept Jess.

"Ask Miss Newton if she will be so good as to ride round to me," she said.

Jess started when the man came up with his message, and the color flooded her face and neck.

"I will ride round at once," she said, and in a moment or two she was beside the carriage.

Lady Marvelle held her hand and pressed it, and looked up into her face with the sweetness of a tender-hearted woman who has not grown too old to sympathise with the sorrows of the young.

"My dear," she said, quite like a "common" person—say a carpenter's wife. "I did not know you were in London!"

"We only come up a week or two ago," said Jess.

"I am so glad to meet you," said Lady Marvelle. "Where are you staying?"

"At Portmore Gardens; we have a flat," replied Jess. By this time the color had gone again, and the momentary brightness in her eyes and voice had vanished. Lady Marvelle checked a sigh.

"Do you think I may come and call on you—that your father will let you come and see me, dear?"

Jess colored, then looked down.

"Why not?" she replied. "He—I shall be very pleased. We know no one in London—I have some friends,"—she was thinking of Polly Baker, her old schoolfellow at Minerva House—"but they are at the seaside."

"I will call this afternoon. I will have a card,"—she did not want to face Mr. Newton, whom she regarded as a kind of ogre, and a presumptuous one at that, to refuse his daughter to a Clansmere!—"and you must come and see me. Scarcely anyone is back yet, and I am very lonely. I cannot tell you how glad I am to see you, my dear."

"And I am very glad to see you," said Jess. She did not ask after Lord Clansmere, or—or anybody else; and, after chatting for a few minutes, they parted.

When Jess got home, she found Lady Marvelle's card, and on the back of it a line written, "Will you come to tea with me to-morrow? Do!—Ada Marvelle."

She took it into her father's study, and gave it to him without a word. He looked down at it in silence for a moment or two, then he said—

"Go, by all means, dear." He paused. "You—you will not see anyone else there?"

Jess flushed, then went pale.

"Not—Lord Ravenhurst, if you mean him, father."

He inclined his head as if satisfied, and no more was said.

Jess went round to Lady Marvelle's house in Manchester Square, the next day. The house was small, but the epitome of comfort and refinement, and seemed, to Jess, to be pervaded by the spirit of the gentle, loving old lady.

She found her in a tiny boudoir of satinwood and satin. The day was rather chilly, and a fire was burning in the bronze grate, and a copper kettle was on the hob, with a tea service in a delicious little nook in a corner of the fireplace.

Lady Marville, who seemed to fit into the picture made by the cosy room as if she had been designed for it, or it for her, received Jess with gentle welcome, and, drawing her towards her, kissed her affectionately.

Jess had hard work to keep the tears from her eyes, but she managed it, and Lady Marvelle put her into a comfortable saddle-bag chair, and insisted upon her taking off her hat.

"No one will come in," she said. "I have said, 'Not at home,' to my callers. And we will make our own tea. I am rather fond of dispensing with servants; we rely too much upon them, don't you think, dear?"

Jess assented. She knew that this high-born aristocrat was trying all she knew to be kind and loving, and Jess' heart went out to her.

"You hold the teapot while I put the water in," said Lady Marvelle. "It is the only way to make good tea. A great many persons ask me where I get my tea, they say it is so good; but I get it anywhere; it doesn't matter really. It is the kettle on the fire, and the warm teapot—see, dear, it is quite hot inside!—that makes the tea so nice. That is brown bread and butter—the butter is sent up from the Castle farm." She stopped, and looked away, but Jess smiled bravely.

"They ought to make good butter there," she said; "the meadows are so rich."

"Yes, and how do you like London?" Lady Marvelle asked, hastening to change the dangerous subject. "Have you been out much?"

Jess told her of the theatres and concerts, and Lady Marvelle watched her.

"And you are enjoying yourself? That is right, dear! There's nothing like London. But you must not overdo it—must not go out too much, all at once. Have you been quite well lately?"

Jess laughed listlessly.

"Yes, oh, yes. No; I have not been very well."

"What has been the matter?" asked Lady Marvelle.

"I don't know," said Jess, looking down at her teacup. "But I am better now, and shall soon be quite well."

Lady Marvelle understood. It was as if the girl's loving, aching heart were laid before her. Jess was pining for Bruce her lover. And very naturally. And he—!

She sighed as she recalled the vision of the haggard face, with its bloodshot eyes, as she saw it under the street lamp. Yes, certainly, Mr Newton had much to answer for!

The agony of two human hearts, and, perhaps, the utter wreck of one human life!

"And how is Lord Clansmere?" asked Jess, after a pause in the conversation, for she felt that any attempt to ignore the earl's existence would be worse than a commonplace inquiry.

"Not very well; he has the gout," said Lady Marvelle, "and he has gone to Carlsbad."

"And—and," Jess' voice faltered, but she went on bravely. "Lord Ravenhurst?" Surely she might ask for him.

Lady Marvelle was silent for a moment, then she said in a low voice—

"I am asking myself whether I ought to tell you the truth or not."

Jess raised her eye for an instant with a quick alarm.

"The truth—oh, the truth, please!" she murmured, with a little catch in her voice. "He—he is not ill! You must tell me, indeed you must!"

"Yes; it will be better," said Lady Marvelle, with a sigh. "You would hear sooner or later. He is too well-known for you to remain in ignorance."

"Tell me!" pleaded Jess.

"Bruce is—ill," said Lady Marvelle, gravely.

Jess caught her breath.

"Ill—oh! Where—where is he? What is it?"

"He is in London—alas!"

"In London!" echoed Jess, and the color flew to her face. He was in London, and, perhaps, near her! Her heart beat wildly, then it sank again.

"Why do you say, 'alas,' as if—as if there were something wrong?" she asked.

Lady Marvelle touched her eyes with her handkerchief, for they were full of tears—tears for this poor girl as well as Bruce.

"My dear, it is so hard to tell you. Perhaps you would not understand—you are so young and so—so innocent, and ignorant of men and the world."

"No, I am not!" said Jess. "I—I have learned a great deal lately." Her sorrows had taught her something of the great mystery of life. "You must—you must speak out, Lady Marvelle; ah, yes, you must not keep anything from me! Is he very ill?"

"Very, I am afraid!" said Lady Marvelle, in a hushed voice, which was as insignificant as her words. "He had not been to see me—and he always comes directly he comes to London—but I saw him in the streets, one night, and,"—she paused, as her voice broke—"oh, my dear, so dreadfully changed!"

Jess held her breath.

"What—how?" she asked, when she could speak.

"He looked the shadow and mockery of his old self," said Lady Marvelle, with a sigh. "I cannot describe the change in him; but if you know him as I do, if you knew what the Clansmeres are, you would understand."

There was silence for a moment, then Lady Marvelle continued. Having said so much, wisely or unwisely, she must tell all—or nearly all—for there were some things which could not be told to this pure, innocent girl.

"They are all alike; reckless, desperate when—when the fit is on them. Bruce is the best of his family, and hitherto has kept quiet and straight as they call it; but now"—she wiped her eyes and sighed—"I knew when I saw his face—for I did not speak to him; he would not come up to the carriage, though I called him, and he heard me—I knew what was happening!"

"What?" asked Jess, under her breath; but she divined dimly.

"He had just—broken out, dear," said Lady Marvelle. "And when a Clansmere breaks out there is no folly, no wildness too foolish and wild for him. And other men help them! Ah, that is the worst of it!"

"And Bruce—he—is all alone?"

"Yes, dear. Alone with his grief and disappointment. And that means madness for him. Other men take their troubles quietly, and grow sullen, perhaps, but not Bruce. It drives him mad for the time, and sometimes the madness lasts so long that it means utter ruin and wreck."

Jess could almost hear her heart beat.

"And—and—it is because of me! Oh! I have done this! It is I who have injured him!" she panted.

Lady Marvelle put her thin hands upon Jess' clasped ones; scarcely less thin, by the way.

"You must not say that, my child," she said soothingly. "It was not your fault. You love him—he told me, my brother told me——"

"Yes, I love him!" said poor Jess, with the tears welling to her eyes. "Lady Marvelle, I—I would die for him, die to save him! Oh, tell me what I can do!"

Lady Marvelle shook her head.

"No one can do anything," she said. "None of us could go near him; indeed, he would not see us. We can only wait——"

"Wait! Wait until he—he kills himself! You said how ill he was!"

"Yes, ill, body and soul."

"And—and nothing can be done! Oh, it is wicked, wicked and cruel!" burst from Jess' white lips. "And—and he is good. Yes, he is good, I know that! I have heard him talk! I know that he would have been so different, if—if——"

"You had married him? Yes, my dear," said Lady Marvelle. "Ah, forgive me, my child." For Jess had winced as if the old lady had struck her.

"Yes, it is my fault; and I can do nothing. I have ruined his life, and I can do—nothing!" she repeated in a dull voice, her eyes fixed on vacancy.

"No, my dear, you cannot help him. You must do your duty."

"Is it my duty to stand afar off, and see him—the man I love"—she did not blush or stammer now at the sacred avowal, but looked almost sternly before her—"go to ruin; for that is what it means! Oh, it is cruel—cruel!"

"You must do your duty by your father," said Lady Marvelle. "Ah! I ought not to have told you! But it is because I know you love him; we both love him. Forgive me."

"You were right to tell me," said Jess.

Then she sat silent, her fingers clasped tightly, her head bent, for some minutes.

Soon after she rose to go, and Lady Marvelle, wiping her tears away, took her in her arms, and kissed her soothingly.

"I don't know how you have managed to steal into my heart so quickly, my dear," she said tenderly, "but you crept in the first night I saw you, and when I thought that you would be Bruce's wife I felt as if God had at last given me a daughter.

"There—there—don't cry. You will come and see me often? I mean often. Come whenever you like. And, dear, we will not speak of Bruce again."

Jess went down to the carriage, but after a few minutes the confined space seemed to be stifling her, and she pulled the check string and alighted.

"I will walk the rest of the way," she told the footman.

It was dusk, but if it had been quite dark she could not have ridden farther.

She got down at the beginning of one of the large throughfares, and walked on quickly, scarcely seeing the things around her. A storm of pent-up love, of anguished pity for Bruce, raged within her breast.

A wiser woman, a woman of the world, would have been tempted to blame him, perhaps to feel contempt for the madness which possessed him; but Jess, innocent Jess, only remembered that he was mad for love of her. For love of her!

"Oh! Bruce, Bruce, my dearest, my love!" she murmured broken-heartedly, and then, at that very moment, as if her love and her pity had acted as a charm, and conjured up his presence, she saw him.

He was coming towards her with his head bent, his steps slow and listless, and a thrill of joy and sadness, and even of fear, ran through her.

She prayed that he might not see her, and yet dreaded that her prayer should be answered. He came nearer, would have passed her, but just as he was nearly past, he looked up. She caught sight of his haggard face, with "Wreck" writ large on it, and uttered a faint cry.

He stopped dead short, and looked at her, the look of a man who sees the ghost of the woman who is before his mental vision day and night.

"Jess!" he said hoarsely.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A GLORY PAST.

O summer day whose golden glory found
No echo in my heart, no answering glow!
O, night, in peaceful starry lustre crowned,
Mocking the life that peace no more might know.

While I had made the years one long love-song,
My Knight had trod Life's measure merrily:
The ring that glittered on my hand so long,
Was but a worthless pledge—a burnished lie.

And so it passed; the sunshine of my youth
Died slowly out, and left me worn and chill,
Mistrusting human friendship, human truth,
Yet mourning o'er my shattered idol still.

Gold and Alloy.

BY A. R. A.

"IT'S the last time, Nell; I've been played with, and held on and off long enough. Jim says there never was a woman worth what I've gone through, but he doesn't know. When a girl has a tight grip of a man's heart, a man must be either happy or ruined!"

"I wish, Ned, you would think with Jim, and give her up; I—I mean try to—or"—hesitating—"pretend to. It might make her different."

"I can't do it, Nell; I have tried—made her believe my love was growing cool. She laughed in my face, let me go the length of the line, then beckoned me, and—and, idiot, I have always gone. Since that Lieutenant Stanhope has started his station at Long Creek she has been worse than ever; she flirts with him before my very eyes. No, Nell; I've made up my mind. I'll ask her right down—I'll force her to give me an answer—then——"

"Then?" and the girl addressed lifted her eyes somewhat anxiously. "If, Ned, it's 'no?'"

"Then never will I put faith in woman. If, Nell, it's 'no,' then has she ruined my life, for I don't care what becomes of it. I'll go into the bush—I'll turn bushranger—I swear I will—and if the bullet of some one of the mounted police rids me of life, let her know it's her work."

"Ned!" The girl sprang up, scared from her seat by the window where she had been seeming to work. "Oh! in mercy don't talk like that. Think of uncle—think of me."

"Uncle and you will get on very well without me, Nell," was the response. "Better, for I've been no hand at anything for weeks. But," with change of manner, "she won't say 'no'—she can't, Nell—she wouldn't have the heart, after all this time leading me on. Would she? Nell for Heaven's sake give me hope!"

He crossed to her, taking her hands tightly in his own, and gazing into her face with such a desperate earnest pleading that she could not have refused that prayer, though she had small belief in her own assurance.

The above conversation took place one warm December morning in the sitting room of a station the property of Walter Douglas, who years previously had settled in Australia with his little daughter and orphan nephew, and had prospered. Life in that free land went on merrily as marriage bells, until Long Creek Station was taken by a Mr. Vaughan, with one daughter, a bright, good looking, sparkling girl, and a born flirt.

Ned Clayton, a handsome, honest hearted young fellow, very impressionable, had been soon lured by her fascinations, surrendering himself heart and soul to her wayward caprices, until not only had his manhood revolted, but, the presence of Lieutenant Stanhope at a neighboring station, in whom he at once recognised a dangerous rival, had made him determined, out of very desperation, to learn the truth.

"You've given me heart, Nell. You've put new life in me. Heaven bless you," he exclaimed, gaily.

"I'll not delay a moment. There's nothing to be done this afternoon here. I'll ride over to Long Creek. If Flo says 'yes,'" giving a "hurrah," "I shall be the happiest fellow under the sun. If she say 'no,' then"—a white misery spread over his face; he reeled as he pressed his hands to it—"then Heaven help me, for I shall be a maddened, desperate man. Pray for me, Nell—pray for me."

Helen Douglas, a pretty, gentle girl, neatly attired, a blue snood, or ribbon, holding her red-golden hair from her white forehead, made a quick step towards the speaker, her features full of sympathy and alarm, but Ned Clayton dashed out on to the verandah, and a second after disappeared round the corner of the house.

Helen, staggering to his chair, sitting down, bent her face on her hands. A sob burst from her lips. How devotedly she loved this cousin none knew but herself. Her passion was the stronger that she had to press it down, stifle it in her own bosom.

To add to her trial, Ned had made her confidante in regard to his love for Florence Vaughan, pouring into her ear all his hopes and fears.

What a martyrdom women will undergo for those they love! Helen listened, soothed, or rejoiced with him, praying for the consummation of his happiness, though it must be the death knell of her own.

But, and genuinely did it grieve her, she had long discovered that the man had not yet arrived to whom Florence could give her affection, or, if he had, it was not Ned. That, did she marry him, it would be for lack of somebody else to like better.

"But how could I tell him that?" she thought now. "I dare not. He would never forgive me. Heaven grant that it is I who am deceived, not he."

Raising her head quickly, she looked from the window, hearing the clatter of hoofs.

A moment, and Ned appeared, leaping the gate of the stockyard into the road, down which he galloped at full speed, his features set with such a firm purpose, that Helen uttered a cry of alarm.

A space she watched his retreating figure, then sped from the room to the outbuilding, where she found Walter Douglas.

"Father!" she exclaimed, excitedly, "have your horse saddled, and ride to Long Creek after Ned. In mercy, I pray you to. He has gone there to force an answer from Florence, to get her to promise to be his wife."

"A hoity-toity, flirty lass, Nell. Not much in her."

"Too much, father, for Ned's, or our happiness," proceeded Helen, excitedly. "If she refuse him, and she will, I know she will, she will do even worse than break Ned's heart—it will be his ruin."

Rapidly she recounted what had passed between her and her cousin.

Walter Douglas listened, gravely.

"Tut, tut! A young chap in that straight says always more than he would ever carry out. A bushranger, indeed. Ned's made of honester stuff. Still, poor fellow, it may be best for him to have a friend at hand, if the lass intends to send him about his business. There, I'll go Nell. I'll get there in time.

"A young chap needs a lot to work up the steam to propose. Poor lad!" he added, sotto voce, as he hastened round to the stables. "Why wasn't he wise enough to look nearer home, where he might have had a jewel for the asking, worth twenty Florence Vaughans?"

Meanwhile, Ned rode towards Long Creek, never slackening speed until the station came in sight. Alighting at a clump of trees, he hitched his horse to one approaching the station on foot.

He fancied at that hour he knew where he might be sure to find her whom he sought, and until he learned his fate, he did not desire the other inmates to be made aware of his arrival.

Skirting the station, he entered a small plantation in the midst of which was an arbor he himself had assisted to build. At this time it was one mass of bloom, making quite a fairy bower. It was here Flo sat of afternoons.

"And," she had said, with a coquettish smile, "I can't do that, you know, without always thinking of you, who did so much to credit it."

He had found her there frequently, and now, entering through a small gate, made his way in the direction. As he drew near, the murmur of voices told him if Florence was in the arbor she was not alone.

He listened. Yes, it was she, and her companion was a man. The hot blood of jealous suspicion rushed to Ned's face, and into his brain.

Quitting the path, he advanced to the back of the arbor, the creepers covering which were not so thick but that he could see through them. Bending forward, his breath held, his brain bursting, this is what he saw.

Florence, resting on the shoulder of the Lieutenant, whose arms encircled her. She was looking up into his face, saying:

"I never have loved any one out you, dear. Until we met I did not know what love was."

"My Florence! My beautiful wife! Mine—my own!" exclaimed the Lieutenant, kissing the full red lips.

Ned Clayton watched no more. Reeling, staggering like a drunken man, or one struck by death, he went from the place, from the plantation, back to the tree clump.

There, for a space, he fell prone in an agony no eye witnessed. Finally he sprang up, leaping into his saddle; his eyes were dilated, a mad recklessness was in his expression, he laughed aloud a laugh that would have frozen Helen Douglas' heart to hear.

"A short life and a merry one," he cried. "My hand against the world—the world's hand against mine. Who shall win? Who cares? The sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep. I live now but to drown thought, to woo oblivion. On, Laddie, on," to his horse; "you are the only friend I will retain of the past."

Urging the animal to greater speed, he soon was out of sight of Long Creek, heading his way to the ranges, away from his uncle's station.

* * * * * * *

Six years have passed since Ned Clayton fled at that helter-skelter pace into the arms of ruin, all because of a woman. Bitter had been Helen's grief, many, a, many the tears she had shed, until Walter Douglas had almost sternly forbidden her to weep any more for one who had proved himself worthless.

"I'll never believe that, father, of Ned," she replied, quietly, "I can't. Finding how Flo had treated him, he was mad with despair, and unaccountable for his actions. Possibly he made a fearful plunge into wrong, and now is too ashamed to own contrition."

"One of those plunges," responded the old man, "which drags a fellow the deeper the more he struggles. No, no, lass, we must have done with him. The bad lot he's among will cling to him."

Helen said no more. Gravely, calmly, she went about her duties, ageing a little from soreness of heart, but trying, trying so hard to retain belief in the man she secretly loved.

Never once had they seen Ned Clayton, but now and again they had heard of him. Soon after his disappearance a distant station had been "stuck up" by bushrangers, and he (Ned) had been named as of them. Such was the only news they ever had.

Those six years had slipped away entirely when two men sat over a camp fire one evening in the bush, talking.

The elder was a short, squarely built, hirsute man; the younger was Ned Clayton, much—very much changed.

Thin featured, marked by a wasting care, his expression grave, at times listless, at others, verging into that recklessness of despair felt by those who, from the depths they have fallen, look with regret to the hill top they feel to be unattainable, even to their greatest effort.

There was a dogged gloom on his countenance this evening. The glow from the bright camp fire showed it plainly, as he sat drinking the tea out of his pannikin, and gazing into the crackling sticks.

"You a bushranger!" remarked the other, scornfully. "Why, if I weren't a better, I'll go hang myself. You take your share, and leave us the work."

"That's false!" exclaimed Ned Clayton, throwing up his head. "I have taken no share. I have taken nothing but what I have fairly earned. Little enough, but sufficient."

"Each one's a right to do his share," responded the other, doggedly. "We don't want a pair of white hands where ours are all black. The others are beginning to think so too. There, don't flare up; it's for your good I speak."

"If your leader is content," exclaimed Ned, "what right have you to complain? White hands? True, they are white; but that makes small difference. When I cast my lot in with you, I became as one of you."

"You see, one day you'll get the blues, and peach."

"No, by Heaven! Your leader, Michael Boyne, was a friend to me when I hadn't one in the world. He found me lost in the bush, perishing from thirst. I don't think I was glad he stopped my dying, but he didn't know that. The friend he was to me I'll ever be to him."

"All right," said the other, rising to his feet, and shaking himself; "it's the boss' affair, not mine. I reckon you are true grit."

"I am. Are you going off now?" as the other approached his horse.

"Yes. Do you wait until I come back?"

"I'll wait an hour; then let each make tracks to Spits Gully."

"All right, but I shall be back," and climbing into his saddle he rode off.

Directly he was alone, Ned Clayton, with a half groan, dropped his face into his hands, and lapsed into revery, a revery in which all the doings in that six years rolled before him.

Where he rode that day of despair he never knew. He seemed to come out of a dream, weak and faint, to find a man kneeling by his side holding a pannikin to his lips; the man was Michael Boyne, the bushranger.

Before Ned knew that, Michael had nursed him back to life, and had heard his story. Michael felt a liking for the man he had saved, let him join the band, but left it to his own choice whether he took part in any of their deeds.

Ned never did. As he awoke to reason, he awoke again in his natural rectitude. But he knew, save for his own soul's comfort, it made little difference; their fate must be his fate.

How he regretted his mad folly in letting a coquette bring him to this disgrace. His love for her had long died out; often he thought of gentle cousin Nell, and the happy home it had been before Florence crossed his path. He dared not return now: he could not, for the shame of it.

"If oo please, I'm lost. Do oo know where's father?"

Ned, started by the interrogation, looking quickly up, beheld standing at the opposite side of the camp fire a fair-haired child of between four and five years. Its dress was torn and soiled, its hat, if it had had one, gone.

The pretty baby features showed the stain of tears, they seemed even now swelling in the china-blue eyes fixed with pleading and confidence on Ned.

"Why," ejaculated the latter, "where did you come from?"

"From father's station. Will oo take me back? Please, do."

Running round the fire, the child sat down by Ned, trustfully taking his arm. By much questioning he elicited that the child must have been lured from a station by the promise of some birds; in fact, that it had been kidnapped, no doubt for reward.

That the kidnappers being pursued had deserted the poor little mite, who had strayed on in evidently much distress, until, attracted by the fire, it had found Ned, of whom, with instant trust, it had taken possession.

"Me very tired," said the child, nestling to him. "Take me home to mother."

"Where do you live, little one? You must tell me that."

"Kangoo Station, with father, mother, and Bob."

Kangaroo Station? Ned knew it.

"And what's your name, my boy?"

"Siddy Stanhope," sleepily.

"Stanhope?"

Ned started. It was the Lieutenant's name. Could this be her child?

"Your mother is called Florence?" he said.

"Father says 'Flo.'"

Her child. Stolen; lost; and he had found it. Her children, and his—his rival's. What right had he to care for it, befriend it. Restore it, he dared not. It would be risking his liberty, it might be his life, for the mounted police were in the district. What was the child to him?

Looking down he perceived the mite, exhausted by fatigue and grief, had dropped asleep, its fair head resting against his arm.

As Ned gazed, all the better nature in him was aroused. He found new strength in the weakness, the innocence of the child. If he did not take him back, then must he live with the bushrangers.

"No!" short and determined. He would take him home. He would risk the danger. If he were arrested, did it much matter? Life was a sorry affair to him now.

Tearing a leaf from a note-book he wrote a brief explanation to the leader, Michael Boyne.

"If I'm taken, I'm taken," he concluded "But do not fear; harm shall never come to you through me."

Folding it, addressing it, he fixed it on the trunk of the tree by the fire, got his horse, then gently lifting the sleeping child in his arms, set off at a quick pace for Kangaroo Station, nearly eight miles distant.

All through the quick ride the child slept, its golden head resting against Ned. All along, as he went, Ned was reflecting upon the strangeness of fate which had used him as the means to save her child.

Was he running into this risk because the boy was Flo's? No. Had it been a stranger's he must have done the same. He could no longer love, for he had ceased to respect the woman who had played him false.

Coming in sight of the station, he perceived, though the hour was getting late,

that there were still lights in the windows, and people were moving about.

Forgetful now of danger, thinking only of the bitter pleasure he would derive in placing the child in Florence's arms, thus heaping the coals of a remorseful fire upon her head, he crossed the moonlighted road, swung back the gate, and advanced towards the house.

Just at the moment a woman appeared on the verandah, then with a cry came speeding towards him.

"Found—found! Oh, he is found!" she exclaimed. Then, as grasping the bridle, she looked up at the rider, she ejaculated in amaze, "Ned!"

"Nell!" he cried, in his warm surprise. "You here!"

"Yes, yes. Uncle and I were riding to Woolston," she answered, hurried, excitedly, "when we heard of a child being stolen. We could not but come to offer aid and sympathy. Ned, Florence is mad with grief.

"Her life surely would have been in danger had she lost her boy; she is pitiable to behold, and you—you, Ned, have restored him to her. Oh, heaven bless you, Ned. Come in, let her thank you. They were just organising another search party."

At that moment a man, who, unperceived, had come round the side of the house, having drawn nearer, now sprang forward, crying as he attempted to clutch Ned's bride:

"Ned Clayton, the bushranger! I arrest you—you are my prisoner."

But swiftly, as he recognised the officer, Ned slewed his horse round, dashed at the gate, and leaped it.

Drawing his revolver, the man fired, then rushed back into the outbuildings, calling for his horse.

As Ned heard him leave, he paused, looking round. Nell rushed wildly to him.

"Go—go!" she cried. "Why do you linger? Where can I see you?—I must!"

"At 'Possum Plain," he replied. "Good-bye, darling!" and he was galloping down the road.

"Darling!" As the word rushed through her every nerve like sunshine, Nell, knowing that each minute's delay gave better chance to Ned, running to the high stockyard gate, through which the officer would come as the shortest, nipped tightly the padlock. The key was not there or she would have locked it.

Soon the officer appeared, calling to her to open the gate. Then, as she stood motionless in the moonlight, heedless of the commotion at the house into which the aroused child had run; of the farm-hands rushing out—heedless of all but the officer, swearing at delay, as, heading his horse at the gate, he cleared it by a hair's breath, alighting staggering—with a scream, for yet Ned was in sight, Nell, springing forward, clung with all her strength and all her weight to the officer's rein to stay him.

"Let go, girl," he exclaimed, furiously.

"No, no," answered Nell, fiercely, "you shall not go; you shall not take him—the man I love!"

But with a grip he caught her wrist, and hurled her back on the road, and spurred on in pursuit.

Once he paused, and dismounting, examined the ground. The marks that had arrested his attention were marks of blood.

"I hit him," he exclaimed; "then he's safe."

A week had elapsed. Ned Clayton had not been taken; by some means he had eluded capture, and by the authorities was believed to have rejoined the bushrangers.

But at the end of that week, one morning about dawn, Walter Douglas, Helen, and Florence left Kangaroo Station, bound for Possom Plain in search of Ned.

They found him in a shepherd's deserted shanty, attended by a boy aborigine, and slowly, very slowly recovering from the wound he had received from the officer's revolver.

"Don't look scared, Nell," he smiled, wanly, she and her father having entered first; "I am recovering, and I'm sorry. I do not fear death; I have done nothing, I swear, to merit the ill name I have won."

"A man is ever judged by his friends," remarked old Douglas, drily.

"True, and"—bitterly—"the bushrangers were my friends in trouble. Did you say Florence was here? Let her come."

Coming in alone, on her knees by his rude bed, she made confession of her remorse, entreating his forgiveness of the wrong she had done him, a wrong he had so nobly avenged. And the forgiveness was granted with a smile.

"Now let Nell come again," he said. "I want to know how these six years have passed with them, and I want to hear it from her lips."

So Nell sat by his side, her very presence bringing soothing and peace, and recounted what their life had been since he had left, never letting him guess the cankering sorrow that had ever dwelt in her own heart.

Three years ago Walter Douglas had sold the station profitably, and started a yet more thriving one in New Zealand, but that also was now sold, and they were about to return to Scotland, the old country.

"We had come back here only on a visit of farewell, Ned, and—and to try if we could get news of you. If we did, if we could see you, we felt that we could persuade you to come with us and lead a new life in the old land."

"And uncle wishes that?"

"Ask him. Ned, he was very angry at first, but soon he began to understand you were not capable of great evil, and there were extenuating circumstances."

"Heaven bless you, Nell! That was your teaching, I feel. Yes, though with these outlaws, I was never of them. Ah, me! how blind I have been, Nell. I was living with pure gold, yet I went and worshipped base alloy. I know it now—I know it. Too late, too late!"

He turned his head from her, his voice was full of tears.

"Ned," softly, "is it ever too late? Is it too late?" Then, as he turned and looked at her, "My love has never changed—it never could—it never will."

Then Ned knew the truth, and so great a joy that it was akin to pain swept over him, that, in his weakness, he wept, and Nell soothed and comforted.

One month later, in a vessel bound for England, sailed Walter Douglas, Helen, and a thick-bearded man, with whom they seemed to make speedy acquaintance after they were well out to sea. They alone knew his right name.

"Nell, darling," this "stranger" said once, standing by her side on deck, "if a woman brought me to the brink of ruin, it is an angel who has saved me for a better life."

Disease and Death.—The precise date when kings of England first began to bless rings as preservatives against cramp or epilepsy is uncertain. The earliest mention of the practice occurs in the reign of Edward II.

The prayer used in the blessing of the ring is, of course, in Latin, and while repeating it, the king—to impart the salutary virtue—rubbed the ring between his hands.

The use of galvanic rings for the cure of rheumatism is not extinct; and it is still an article of belief with some persons that there is virtue enough in a gold ring to remove a sty from the eyelid by rubbing it. The operation should be repeated nine times.

The ancients appear to have been acquainted with vegetable poisons as speedy in their effects as the modern strychnia, and these poisons were often concealed in the hollow of a ring.

These rings were put together with an amount of skill far beyond that of modern jewelers, for the soldering of the joints of the gold plates of which they were formed is absolutely imperceptible even when breathed upon—a test under which modern solder always assumes a lighter tint. Hannibal, from fear of being delivered up to the Romans, swallowed poison, which he carried with him in the hollow of a ring.

Demosthenes died in a similar manner, and many other instances are on record.

Words of Cheer.—Words of cheer are words of help. Words of gloom are words of harm. There is a bright and a dark side to every phase of life and to every hour of time.

If we speak of the bright side, we bring the brightness into prominence; if we speak of the dark side, we deepen its shadows.

It is in our power to help or to hinder by a word any and every person with whom we have any dealing.

If we see a look of health or of hope in the face of an acquaintance whom we casually meet, and we tell him so, he goes on his way with new energy and life.

If we see a look of failing strength and of heaviness of heart in one to whom we speak, and we emphasise the fact that he looks poorly, we give him a push downward as our contribution to the forces which affect his course.

A look or a word can help or can harm our fellows. It is for us to give cheer or gloom as we pass on our way through life; and we are accordingly responsible for the results of our influence.

Improving.—A celebrated German physician was once called upon to treat an aristocratic lady the sole cause of whose complaint was high living and lack of exercise. But it would have never done to tell her so; so his medical advice ran thus:

"Arise at five o'clock, take a walk in the park for one hour, then drink a cup of tea, then walk another hour, and take a cup of chocolate. Take breakfast at eight o'clock."

Her condition improved visibly, until one fine morning the carriage of the baroness was seen to approach the physician's residence at lightning speed.

The patient dashed up to the doctor's house, and, on his appearing on the scene, she gasped out:

"Oh, doctor, I took the chocolate first!"

"Then drive home as fast as you can," directed the astute disciple of Æsculapius, rapidly writing a prescription, "and take this emetic. The tea must be underneath."

The grateful patient complied. She is still improving.

Photographing the Baby.—By the time the start for the gallery is made the baby is thoroughly exhausted and out of patience. The whole party go along, of course.

When the gallery is reached, coaxing, tickling, and baby talk all fail to put the subject into a good humor. One says she doesn't see what makes him so cross.

Another wonders what makes him act so. Still another declares that he must be sick. The photographer then comes to the rescue. He has had experience in many just such cases, and knows what to do.

He cannot do anything but what is a novelty to the baby, and he generally succeeds in quieting the child, and successfully producing his likeness.

He does it in the midst of difficulties though. He has all the elderly attendants of the baby to combat at first. They finally realise the fact that the artist can do better without their efforts, and as they go homeward one says:

"How quickly he got the baby still! It's perfectly wonderful! Some men do take to children that way, and can do anything they want with them. I don't wonder they take all their babies to him to have their pictures taken!"

Kill and Capture.—When after the second battle of Bull Run, General Sickles assumed command of a division of the Army of the Potomac, he gave an elaborate farewell dinner to the officers of his old Excelsior Brigade.

"Now, boys, we will have a family gathering," he said to them as they assembled in his quarters.

Pointing to the table, he continued, "Treat it as you would the enemy."

As the feast ended, an Irish officer, Captain Byrnes, was discovered by Sickles in the act of stowing away three bottles of champagne in his saddle-bags.

"What are you doing, sir?" gasped the astonished general.

"Obeying orders, sir," replied the captain, in a firm voice.

"You told us to treat that dinner as we would the enemy, and you know, general, what we don't kill we capture!"

Big Noses in Favor.—In Japan the nose is the only feature which attracts attention. The nose determines the beauty or ugliness of the face, according as it is big or small.

This is probably due to the fact that difference in noses constitutes about the only distinction between one Japanese face and another. The eyes are invariably black, the cheek-bones high, and the chin receding.

In Japan a lady who has a huge proboscis is always a great beauty and a reigning belle. There are few large noses among the natives, and lucky is he or she upon whom nature lavishes one.

In all Japanese pictures representing the supposedly beautiful woman the artist invariably improves on nature by depicting this feature as abnormally developed.

Some people seem to be taught, others are ashamed of it, as they would be of going to school when they are old; but it is never too late to learn what it is always necessary to know. And it is no shame to learn so long as we are ignorant—that is to say, so long as we live.

Scientific and Useful.

Luminous Inks.—Luminous inks may now be used to print signs to be visible in the dark. Zinc salts and calcium are the mediums generally used.

Salt in Water.—A ton of Atlantic water, when evaporated, yields 81 pounds of salt; a ton of Pacific water, 79 pounds; the waters of the Dead Sea more than twice as much—187 pounds to the ton.

Automatic Restaurants.—An automatic restaurant has been opened in Berlin, where, by dropping coins in a slot, the dishes are sent up on a tray. Rolls, wine and coffee are now served, and more elaborate dishes are to follow. The inventor is an Italian, and the novel scheme is attracting great attention.

Will Save Many Lives.—A contrivance for quickly stopping machinery—as in the case of some person being drawn between cogs or rollers—has been recently devised. On touching one of a series of push buttons placed at convenient points the power is shut off and a powerful brake applied to the fly-wheels. A 20-horse power engine, working at ninety revolutions, was stopped in two-thirds of a second.

Portable Electric Light.—The German soldier already has a very complete, and, it must be said, complicated equipment; but it is proposed to add still more to the list of articles he carries. A portable electric light has been produced, the whole apparatus not weighing more than half a pound, and it is suggested that each soldier should carry one in his pocket. It is urged in favor of supplying soldiers with such a light that they would be of inestimable value to men in charge of powder magazines or artillery depots, as the danger of fire and explosion would then be reduced to a minimum. Moreover, they could be used in balloons, for signalling with colored glass at night, and they would also be very useful at trench digging, pontoon throwing, and so forth. The spectacle of a battalion working away with the spade by the light of an electric spark stuck in their helmets would, indeed, be both novel and picturesque.

Farm and Garden.

The Hair.—It is not proper to trim the hair that grows in the horse's ear. Nature intended it to protect the orifice from dust, insects, etc., and sudden atmospheric changes.

Runaways.—The Russians have a simple device which is said to be very effective in checking runaway horses. A thin cord with a running noose around the neck of the horse is used, and when it bolts the cord is pulled. The horse stops as soon as it feels the pressure on the windpipe.

General Farming.—The correct plan for general farming, says an agriculturist, is to raise feed, and the animals to eat it. After this raise anything which a careful study of the markets indicates can be sold at a profit. In this latter department good, sound judgment and all the information available is demanded. Every farmer who pursues this system industriously and intelligently will prosper.

Oats For Fowls.—Oats should be made a regular portion of the grain ration. They serve as an agreeable change, and although wheat is largely used, yet not enough oats are given. It is not advocated to feed much grain, but give a variety. An agreeable mess can be provided by scalding oats and allowing them to remain over night, so as to swell. It is a food that will be highly relished, and if given warm in the morning will serve to invigorate the hens and give them a good start for the day during cold weather.

Points About Geese.—Young geese, nearly grown, bring about 50 cents each in market. Old geese are never sold. They live until 20 years old and hatch young every year. They usually pair, but a gander will mate with two or more if the females are in excess. A cross of Toulouse gander and Embden goose is considered an excellent one. Toulouse or Embden ganders will weigh 20 pounds or more. Geese will pay on a large pasture with a stream of water through it. In summer they need no other food. They should have a dry shelter at night.

Cure before cost, of course; but, besides being a wonderful curative for Throat and Lung diseases, Dr. D. Jayne's Expectorant is about the least expensive remedy; it takes so little of it. The Best Pill—Jayne's Sanative.

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As To Listening.

The part of the listener is, in a singular degree, underrated. The mere auditor appearing to the casual eye a humble being who does nothing but efface his personality and allow himself to be talked at, his function is regarded as hardly worth consideration. One is inclined to look upon him simply as an empty vessel into which the brilliant and over-laden talker may pour his flood of speech or discharge his stock of ideas.

Like the silent member of Congress, he is regarded as a harmless necessary creature, who can, at a moment's notice, be replaced by another, if he is inclined to throw up his part. But, passive as his role may be, the listener, whether taken individually or in a collective sense, is anything but a person of no importance. His function may be compared with that of the regulator of a watch. It is from him that the speaker must take his time; and it is upon his inclination or ability to play his part well that the success or failure of conversation will largely turn.

The orator who is not a mere machine is inevitably affected by his audience. It is in its power to draw from him his best or to becloud all his glory. Appreciation and enthusiasm are his inspiration; apathy and listlessness shrink and dwarf his thought. And, if this be true of platform work, to which the speaker goes prepared, it is still truer of dinner-table or tete-a-tete conversations.

The barometer of a man's wit must rise or fall according to his company. If he is to give out epigrams, he must have an audience which knows how to appreciate them; if he has only dull sluggish listeners, his talk will become more and more diluted, until it is the veriest wish-wash of commonplace.

It often happens that the best talkers are not the best listeners; and wise hostesses have learned by experience that a dinner-party composed entirely of brilliant conversationalists is foredoomed to be the most signal of failures. But the wise hostess will also realize that to intersperse the talkers with "anybodies" is equally to encourage a "frost." One does not perhaps actually say of such a person that he or she is a good listener, as one says that another is a good talker; but the listening quality is well recognized without being named.

Was it not that rather heavy-footed humorist Josh Billings who said that, when his opinion was asked, he always took care to ascertain the inquirer's views and agree with them, thus invariably gaining a reputation for wisdom? In the same way we are inclined to say that So-and-so is an interesting person because he listens patiently and sympathetically to our flood of talk. It is always flattering to vanity to find an attentive listener; and there is a temptation to praise intelligence that reflects a certain amount of glory upon ourselves.

What, then, are the requirements of a good listener? Obviously they depend largely on the character of the person who is being listened to and the nature of the conversation. The listener must be in a measure sympathetic, yet he need by no means be in agreement with what is said; for there is no better stimulus to brilliant conversation than a show of opposition, so long as it does not degenerate into a heated argument. The listener must at least be sympathetic enough to be genuinely interested in the subject, however antagonistic his point of view; and he must be intelligent enough to absorb and understand the conversation, though it sometimes happens that an ill-informed listener may have wit enough to simulate intelligent interest and to avoid being caught tripping. Yet, after this, there seems to be a something that is wanted to complete the requirements of the perfect listener.

The best listeners that we know are not always so because of their higher intelligence or the greater interest they take than their fellows in any particular subject. If this were so, they would vary their attention according to the subject. And yet do we not all know those who may be depended upon at all times and in all circumstances to listen to our lighest or dullest conversation with an open ear? The good listener, we think, betrays among other things a certain kindliness of heart, an absence of egotism, and a capacity for sympathy with individuals as well as with subjects.

Perhaps egotism as much as anything else stands in the way of a person being a good auditor. Take a conversation between two or three or four persons, each of whom has a greater opinion of his own individuality and ideas than of his neighbors'. You know that conversation without its being described, you have overheard it so often. It is like a children's scramble for nuts—every one for himself—except that each is anxious to contribute and not to gather. No one regards his neighbor's chatter, except to wait with bored patience until a momentary lull gives him an opportunity of improving upon it.

Two and three will begin to speak at once, and the weakest lungs or the least persistent person will go to the wall. The sole idea in each mind is to tell the cleverest story, to propound the most startling view, and to create the greatest impression. And yet the pity of it all is that whatever pearls the conversation may contain are unappreciated, except by those who flaunt them, and the individual attempts to dazzle one's neighbor's eyes are all failures.

A man who is without a sense of proportion with regard to his own views is a failure as an auditor, and as a talker he is a severe tax on the patience of the listener. The egotism that ruins talk is not to be measured simply by the extent to which a man talks about himself and his affairs. One may draw largely on one's experiences and introduce oneself into the cast of the play without being the victim of egotism; and, on the other hand, one may studiously avoid personal references and yet be obviously egotistical.

It is the constant self-glorification by speech or action, the insidious method of always standing in the limelight, as it were, of working everything round to one's own point of view, that is egotism. But, although egotism plays a large part in conversation, it does not come within the listener's province to pay any respectful attention to it. The listener is no more called upon than the talker to perform his part for appearance's sake. It is only as an act of courtesy that this is required of him. It is under these conditions that one feels the truth of that somewhat misleading proverb, "Silence is golden."

Perhaps it is stretching a point too far to say that it is incumbent upon us to cultivate an interest in every subject that forms a topic of conversation, for this would in some cases preclude specializing upon any one point.

The maxim, "Know something of everything and everything of something," is an excellent one if broadly interpreted; and, if we put duty altogether on one side and look at selfish interest only, there is hardly room for two opinions on the value of the extended knowledge that can be gained by the patient listener. He who has not broad interests can hardly be reckoned a good listener, and if he is not a good listener, he is allowing one of the widest by-paths to knowledge to be obstructed.

For conversation is the most natural method of learning. Books are an accident of life, a means of overcoming the impossibilities of a direct interchange of thought and a method of keeping the dead in touch with the living—one keeps the best and wisest company in books—but for contemporary thought, to say nothing of the delightful small-talk of life, the book is well-nigh useless.

The listener who is fortunate enough to be admitted to intellectual circles—which is in a large measure a privilege he may earn for himself—has a pleasant part allotted to him that he can only thoroughly enjoy by consciously cultivating a not altogether easy attainment. And even in what we might term quite ordinary circles there is infinite pleasure to be obtained by those who know how to extract the best thought of others—a pleasure attended by no risk, for at the worst it is not the listener who is a bore.

FROM a worldly point of view politeness is the best stock-in-trade that one can possess. It has opened more doors of advancement than any faculty, genius, or art, because for strangers there is no other way to judge another's character than by externals. Even the spurious politeness which is assumed for certain purposes or to accomplish certain ends, has a degree of success, because it overcomes prejudice and wins good opinions.

EVERY word spoken to our daughters regarding courtship and matrimony should be rich with the essence of practical common sense. Romance and sentimentality are well enough in poetry and fiction. Practical domestic life is neither poetry nor fiction; it is reality—a composite of joy, sorrow, success, disappointment, serenity, vexation; it is the average sum of human experience.

NOTHING has ever been done in this world which has contributed largely to the advancement of civilization that did not spring from an enlightened self-interest. At the base of every invention and of every extension of commerce has been the desire of an individual to tower above his fellows.

IF a man or woman will only start with a fixed and honorable purpose in life, and strictly and persistently attempt to carry it out to the best of his or her ability, undismayed by failure or delay, the time may be long in coming, but come it will, when that purpose will be achieved.

AMONG all the virtues, humility, the lowest, is pre-eminent. It is the safest, because it is always an anchor; and that man may be truly said to live the most content in his calling who strives to live within the compass of it.

WHETHER we really enjoy any lot in life depends upon the disposition we carry into it. The kind of eyes with which we see, the kind of temper with which we act, will make much of little or little of much.

EVERY heart has its secret sorrow, which the world knows not; and oftentimes we call a man cold when he is only sad.

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENTS.

G. S. C.—Gray eyes are thought to indicate intellect. Gray-blue eyes a sentimental nature.

E. V. G.—"God save the mark" comes down from the days of games of archery. When an archer made his shot at one of these contests he cried out "God save the mark," that is, prevent any one else's arrow hitting the same mark and displacing mine. It is now used ironically to ridicule a novice whose work is so wide of the mark as to be ludicrous. "Flying for high game" is a phrase referring for its significance to the days of falconry, when birds were hunted by means of tame hawks. Every lord and lady as well as peasant in the country had his or her falcon or trained hawk. They carried these into the woods on their wrists, fastened by a silk cord. When they wished to hunt they undid they the cord and threw the hawk (falcon) off their wrists. He then flew up in the air. If the game was small birds he did not fly high, but if he was set after a heron or another hawk or large bird he soared more loftily—flew for higher game.

BAIRN.—We are glad of the opportunity of repeating the assertion that it is only the visionary and speculative element in Swedenborg's writings which we condemn as having a morbid tendency. That much that he wrote was excellent cannot be doubted; that he—barring his craze about visions—was an estimable man is admitted by all who have studied his life and works; but these facts cannot qualify the judgment that he was himself insane, and that his works are likely to produce an unhealthy state of mind and feeling in others. It is not surprising that writings so imaginative as those of Emanuel Swedenborg should strike the reader with surprise and fascinate him. The doctrines he promulgated are of a nature to relieve the anxiety of minds troubled with the fear of death and final punishment; but the fact that these teachings are comfortable does not make them true. The suggestions of which you speak were, beyond question, thoughts that ought to have been rejected. It is wise to give little heed to such interruptions, and to go on steadily and patiently pursuing the right path.

SPIRIT.—The only part of your letter that takes a "questionable shape" is that which tells of the want of interest in matters intellectual among the people who surround you, and your own longing for a companionship that will respond to every aspiration of your nature. We can understand your intellectual loneliness, though not your mental starvation, for have you not books? But we would suggest, first, that there is a good deal more of the kind of human nature that goes to the making of sterling books in the practical, unimaginative, non-literary women around you than you seem to admit; and, in the second place, a considerable success in both the arts that you hope to cultivate might not bring you that rich and satisfying human fellowship for which you long. In other words, the average of human nature among people who live by brain-work is not unlike that of your farmer-folk. Clever people do not make better friends than the women whom you describe. The best that you can hope for is to know a few intellectual men and women who have also the sterling qualities found in the unspeculative virtuous. The best of all books tell of the beauty of common life. It is quite possible that you do not underrate that beauty, and we may have been unfair in our judgment in thinking we have detected in your letter a hope that somewhere there are circles of people who are bright, intellectual, and soul-satisfying—people so interesting that life with them on a crust would be better than opulence in the company of average mortals.

E. S. S.—There is every reason for believing that gold has been known and regarded as the most precious of the metals from the earliest ages of the world, and has been universally employed as a medium of exchange. The fact of its being found very generally distributed over the surface of the earth, and that, too, in its simple metallic state, combined with its beautiful and therefore attractive color, would naturally cause it to engage the attention of mankind at a very remote period in the world's history. The name of the original discoverer, as a consequence of these conditions, has never been chronicled. In the 41st chapter of Genesis, 42nd verse, we read of its use in the court of Pharaoh, the Egyptian king, under whose tyrannical rule the Israelites were kept in servile bondge. In fact, ancient history teems with references to this metal, but no mention is made of the one who first noted its presence as one of the products of the earth upon which we live. First among the celebrated gold discoveries of the present century in point of date come those of Eastern and Western Siberia, where extensive gold bearing tracts were discovered between 1829 and 1838. The rich gold region of California was discovered in 1847, and four years later, before the excitement attending the California find had time to subside, the world was startled by the announcement of another of not less importance in Australia. Since that time it has cropped out in many other portions of the world in varying quantities, as in British Columbia, Nova Scotia, New Zealand, and last of all, Alaska, where—so say recent reports—the auriferous deposits are extraordinarily rich. As yet it is impossible to verify the wonderful stories told concerning this new Eldorado, but prominent geologists incline to the belief that the precious metal can be found in abundance in that far-off possession of the United States.

IN CHANGING MOOD.

BY D. V. S.

How sweet is Love!
Oft heard I love's sweet praises sung:
How o'er all things a mystic glamor hung;
How glowed the heart, as when wine warms the vein;
How dreamed the sense, as when sleep rules the brain,
How to the kiss a newer warmth is lent,
Yet knew not what the singer meant
By "sweet is love."

How fair is Love!
They said fair love was foe to gloom,
With kindling eye, and lip and cheek of bloom,
So every young; and stole into thy dreams,
And of diviner life gave wondrous gleams.
Yet was I full content, nor understood
The language of such rapturous mood,
When love was fair.

How sweet—how fair—
I longed at last to know; to win
The love-signs hid in dimpled cheek and chin,
The rose of lip, the lily of the brow;
Beseeching Love, who, passing, said, "Not now."
Alas! Love turned and came to me one day,
And then I learned what 'tis to say
How sad is love!

The First Foot.

BY M. H.

TIIEY had been working in the hayfield all day with a blazing sun burning down on them most of the time, but now the last pike was being raised and the last sweep dragged toward it.

Some of the workers who were waiting its arrival were mopping their faces and watching its tumultuous course; some were picking up little rolls of hay which had escaped on the way, or wisps which had blown on to the hedges.

Kitty Carter was one who had chosen the latter employment, and she had got an armful when, among the branches of a young ash, she thought she espied an even ash leaf.

Now, everyone knows that if you find an even ash leaf, i. e., leaf which does not end as ash leaves ought to end, with a leaflet at its tip, but has two placed opposite each other, and if you gather this and put it in your left foot shoe and wear it till bedtime, and then put its crumpled remains under your pillow, you will infallibly dream of the person whom you will marry.

A glimpse at a leaf of this kind having been vouchsafed to Kitty, it was vexatious to be interrupted by the arrival of Farmer Dunthorne's son, even though he was the very man she wished to dream of.

"What are you lating in the dike, Kitty?" he asked.

"Oh, never you mind, Robert," she answered with coquettish brusqueness.

"But I can't help minding. I mind everything you do. I've had my thowts fixed on you all day long. Hasn't no one never tell't you that you're out and out the bonniest lass iv Durham county?"

"Talking that way's just foolishness, Robert," she replied, coloring with pleasure.

"Now, you know it isn't, Kitty! Don't you never tak' a look at yourself i' the glass? Who has such bonnie blue eyes, or such shining goldie-brown hair, or such a face altogether? Come along, you've got what hay there is! Give it to me, it's a big armful for you!" But Kitty did not stir.

"Come, let's be off; they'll be done piking directly." She had one foot in the dry ditch, and as he spoke he tried to draw her away.

"Oh, do be quiet!" she exclaimed. "It's my belief you've gone and made me lose my even ash leaf."

"And if I have, what would it have tell't you more nor you know already? You know who loves you best of all—now don't you, Kitty?"

"Maybe I do, and more likely I don't," said Kitty perversely, just because she was so delighted. Never had he said so much before.

"Kitty, dear Kitty, I— Oh, gracious mercy! what's going on over there?"

He was looking at a gate at the far corner of the field, and when Kitty looked there too, she saw that all the workers had deserted the pike and were crowding round this gate in stormy dispute with a tall young man whom she did not know.

"It's some one who wants to cross our field to get to Sunny Brow, and the men want him to pay his footing first," said Dunthorne.

"Then I'll awarrant you it's Mr. Newby's son—him that ran away. I heard tell they'd forgiven him, and expected him home to-day. Just think! He's not been home for eighteen years! Let's go and see what he's like after all that time in London."

"He'd far better have been here helping his father. Those high medowses of his are fairly choked up wi' thistles. They've taken all the natur' out of the grass."

This was said angrily, for not only was there ill-will between Dunthorne's father and Newby's, but he felt that things had just now gone too far between him and Kitty for her to want to run away to see anything.

"Oh, Robert, Robert! Look! Look! They're killin' of him!" cried Kitty in wild alarm, for the angry men had penned Newby into a narrow circle formed by their outstretched hay forks, and each moment this circle was becoming narrower. But Dunthorne was already half across the field. He heard the men's savage cries as he went.

"You mun pay your footing!" cried some. "No excuses will be taken," cried others.

"You choose to come into our workfield when we're through on piking, so out wi' your brass afore worse happens to you!" The women were as clamorous as the men.

"Ding him down," cried one, "and just tak' what ye think fit out of his pockets!"

"What's the use of putting a fine black coat on yer back, screeched another, "if ye don't know how to behave yerself like a gentleman when it's there? Pay yer footing when yer asked, like other folks, or just tak' the consequences!"

"Drop that, this moment!" cried Dunthrone authoritatively, and Kitty, who was close behind, thought no greater hero could exist.

"Nought of t'sort! It's we're right, and we'll hav't!" Nevertheless some of the forks were lowered a little. Seeing this, three men dashed into the circle and seized Newby—his torn sleeves bore witness to the strength of their grasp.

Dunthorne broke into the circle too, and tried to release Newby, who had knocked down one man and was now trying to dispose of another. "Let him go, I say! Let him go! It's Mr. Newby's son."

"And what of that? Newby's men would mak' you pay if you set foot in their hayfield, and Newby's son mun pay here!"

"He shall not!" cried Dunthorne angrily, and flung off another assailant, but no sooner was one of Newby's hands set free than he settled the question by pulling out a handful of small change and flung it among the crowd.

"There, you pack of beggars, there's what you want! If you drink yourself drunk you'll not behave more disgracefully than you have done now. Nine men with forks against one with no weapon at all; but what can one expect in a place like this."

"It's your native, at any rate," said Dunthorne.

"I know—I know, excuse me, but they've ruined both my coat and my temper. Thanks for your help. Oh! I say! what eyes! What a beautiful girl! Surely she's not a common villager?"

"I must go back to work," said Dunthorne, who knew he was speaking of Kitty; "this awkward business has set us late."

He turned away and saw that Kitty was near. She could not have heard what Newby had said, but seemed more interested than Dunthorne liked.

As he passed her she said, "My! but you did come down on those men! It was real grand!"

"I was sore put out in all ways, Kitty, both with what they did to Newby and what they did to me. I was so happy over there with you, but they drove all my happiness away."

"Dunthorne," said a voice behind him, "being a Winston man myself, I ought to know every one in the village, but the eighteen years spent in the great metropolis have affected my memory. Will you introduce me to this young lady?"

"I'm not a lady," said Kitty with dignity. "I am Kitty Carter, and I live with my grandmother at Brigg End Cottage."

"I know it. It's on the carriage road to my father's. No doubt I know you long ago."

"As a baby in arms," interrupted Dunthorne.

"Oh, ah! I was only trying to establish a claim to Miss Carter's acquaintance."

"Say Kitty, please, Mr. Newby; Miss Carter does not sound right."

"Well then, Kitty, if I may use that pretty name, unless my memory errs, I seem to recollect that when the last pike was made the haymakers used to join hands and dance round it. Will you dance round this pike with me?"

"That's what comes of London!" said Kitty. "You've clean forgotten country ways. It's corn that folks dance and sing about when they're carrying the last load home—or maybe your thinking of the dance at the mell supper?"

"Isn't there a mell supper when the hay's got in?" asked Newby, whereupon Kitty and Dunthorne laughed.

"I imagine by your laughter that this mell supper—mill, of course, it should be—comes off only in honor of corn."

"That's so!" said Dunthorne, and again sweet Kitty smiled.

"I think I'll go home," said Newby, with pique, raising his bruised hat to Kitty as he went.

"What a stuck up idiot of an animal that fellow is!" exclaimed Dunthorne. "He thinks himself better nor all of us put together just because he has spent eighteen years in a dingy old printing house in dirty old London!"

"London's London!" observed Kitty thoughtfully.

"And it's where you'd fain be, I reckon."

"Just to see it. Winston's where I want to live."

"You can't do both," said Dunthorne, and she wondered what he meant.

"How they did rive his coat!"

"It wouldn't have rove if it hadn't been a twopenny halfpenny thing out of a slop shop."

"How you do tak' agin a poor fellow all of a minute!"

"How you do tak' a fancy to a fellow just as quick!"

"Robert!"

"Kitty!"

"Don't Kitty me!"

"Oh, now that he's to Kitty you, I'm not, I suppose."

"There you go making a few words into a great big quarrel! I only meant don't Kitty me when you're so unkind."

"If I'm unkind I'm only like you!"

"I'm neither unkind nor wanting to be. It's you, Robert! It's you from beginning to end. Since Mr. Newby cam' nighhand us it's all you have been. You'd nothing but pleasant words for me by the dike side—it's well for me that I didn' believe them!"

"They were true, Kitty."

"Who's to say what's true and what's not? All I know for certain is that I'm going home, so good-by," and in a moment she was gone.

"Kitty!" he cried, "wait till I get my fork and rake and coat, and I'll set you across the fields. I've something to tell you."

"No! no! It would only be more of the same sort!" and away she sped, leaving him planted there in sheer amazement.

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When a quarrel took place in Winston, and one of the disputants wished for a reconciliation, it was considered expedient to let the other "sleep some of it off."

Dunthorne, partly of necessity, adopted this course. His father had other hay "to in," so there would be more haymaking days with Kitty.

To-morrow it was to be the turn of the Well Springs field, and he would have ample opportunity to lure back to her face the smiles on which his well-being depended.

Alas! when to-morrow came, he was sent to work on a different part of the farm, and next day he had to drive some beasts to Durham market, from which he returned too late to see Kitty out of her house, which meant not seeing her at all, for she had told him not to go there, as her grandmother would not like it.

When he had parted from her in anger, little had he thought that three suns would go down on their wrath.

Sunday came at last, and he got ready for church betimes, doing his best to banish the thought that Newby's way thither led past Brigg End Cottage.

"He shall not walk to church with Kitty!" he resolved. "That is, not if I can hinder him."

So he set off before the time, passed Kitty's home, which stood in a garden full of flowers in an angle between the river and road, and waited by a gate on the road by which Newby would come.

The church bells began to ring cheerily; he waited and watched. No Kitty was visible, but ere long Newby appeared resplendent in a light summer suit, and one of the moss roses for which the Sunny Brow garden was renowned in his buttonhole.

"Church?" he said interrogatively.

"Yes, church."

"Then let's go together, unless you're waiting for some one."

"And that's what I am," Dunthorne answered shortly.

"All right," said Newby, and walked on. Dunthorne observed, however, that he loitered at the Brigg End, but one of the church bells stopped, leaving to its companion the task of hurrying up laggards, and Newby doubtless thought what Dunthorne was beginning to think, that Kitty had already gone.

"That sharp sounding little bell will drive me out of my wits!" thought Dunthorne. "'Come! Come!' it seems to ding angrily into one's ears. I am coming, bell, as fast as I can! I know now that Kitty's gone—she never waits for you and your horrible noise! Thank goodness she set off afore he went by!"

He made all haste, but they were in the middle of the confession when he entered the church. To get to the Windy Nook pew he had to pass Kitty.

She was kneeling like the rest, and never looked up, but he saw what cut him to the heart—instead of the sprig of southernwood which she usually brought, a moss rose from the Newby's garden was lying by her side on a carefully folded pocket handkerchief.

"There's neither peace nor comfort for me, no, not even in God's kirk," thought Dunthorne, and all through the service the flaunting pink of a rose he did not want to see came between him and the pages of his prayer book.

The church "scaled" at twelve. Winston folks always had the justice to admit that their "parson was no spoil-pudding."

Dunthorne hurried out. He would go home without so much as speaking to the girl. He would wait for dear little Kitty and tell her that he could not live without her.

He would stay and conceal his own feelings, and try to discover hers. The third course was that which he adopted, and while he waited in the porch Farmer Newby came to him.

"We are going to have a party next Saturday at Sunny Brow," said he. "It's partly to show our pleure at our lad's return, and partly to hansel our new kitchen. You know maybe that we've built oursel's a grand new kitchen? Well, me and my missis hope you'll put away any notions that I'm not so friendly to you and yourn as might be, and gie us t' pleasure o' your company at our party—party's my missis' grand name for't.

"I just calls it our kitchen warming. Now don't be iv a hurry to say no—there'll be dancing, and I reckon you like that; and bonnie lassies, and I don't suppose you've any great objection to them, so why shouldn't you pleasure us by coming?"

"Thank you for your kindness—"

"Now, my good lad, you're surely not going to say no! It would be wrang! It would be trying to keep up ill will. None of us at Sunny Brow has a scrap of ill will ty you or yourn, and I'll not tak' no for an answer. Come if you will on Saturday, and you'll be welcome."

"You are kind!" began Dunthorne, but Farmer Newby was gone. In another minute Kitty appeared.

She glanced at Dunthorne and colored up to a shade of pink as bright as that of the rose which he could not forget, and just as he was feeling that it might be pleasure at seeing himself, Newby came from behind, leaving it doubtful if the blush had not been due to his presence.

Dunthorne went to her, and heard her joyfully accepting an invitation to the Sunny Brow party.

Worse still, the rector came out, and, espying his church warden, Dunthorne, exclaimed, "The very man I want!" and carried him away to discuss some little parish matter.

"If you ax me, Robert, I say go."

"But, father?"

"He'll be agin it of course, but why keep up ill will?"

"What's it all about, mother? I never knew."

"About nothing! Your father's been touchy jealous all along. He niver could be made to see that Newby hadn't got all the good land, and he himself all the bad, and yet when all comes to all, I'll awarrant you that our farm fetches in fully as much as Newby's."

"Then father has no real ground for being crased?"

"None! There's nothing better about Newby's farm but its name. Sunny Brow is pleasant sounding, but it must ha' been a fool who christened this place Windy Nook, and expected a farmer to settle down comfortable in't. Go to the party; it's real handsome o' them to ax you!"

"You're one of t'right sort, my lad," said Farmer Newby, "you tak' things as they're meant; but you're late. They're been making gam' alive here for better nor an hour!"

The dust was rising in clouds, but Dunthorne soon saw Kitty in a light blue dress and ribbons. She was one of a group of young folks in the opposite corner. Young Newby had just been blindfolded for a game of blind man's buff.

"He can see!" cried some; "he can see! If he puts his head back he can see all down the side of his nose."

"Not I!" cried Newby. "I see nothing at all!"

"For sure?" they asked.

"For sure," he answered; but Dunthorne was convinced he did.

The game began in due form with the inquiry:

"How many horses has your father in his stable?"

"Three: black, white, and gray," replied Newby, as prompted. Whereupon the man who had put this question turned him quickly round twice or thrice to make him lose his bearings, while he said:

"Then turn about and wheel about, and catch whom you may!"

Kitty meanwhile was watching this so intently that she saw nothing else.

"Why, Kitty!" said Dunthorne, "one would think you had never played blind man's buff before!"

"You here, Robert! I never saw you come in!"

Robert, who believed that even if fifty handkerchiefs bound his eyes he would have felt her presence, thought sight quite unnecessary, and was hurt.

"Yes, I'm here," he began sadly, "I—"

That speech was never ended, for with great outspread arms Newby was bearing swiftly down on the part of the room where he knew Kitty to be, and darting frantically hither and thither to make her afraid to leave the spot.

"Kitty," whispered Dunthorne, drawing her quickly away with him, "I have thought of nothing but you since—"

A shriek from Kitty, and a wild plunge under Newby's arms, and a hair's-breadth escape of Dunthorne and Kitty, was the only end of this speech.

"Why have you never given me a chance?" he began, as soon as words were possible, to the girl who had clutched his arm on the way, but a moment later he found that she was not Kitty—Kitty had been tumultuously swept to another side of the room, and Newby, with the precision born of a fair amount of sight, was following her. She tried to escape, she made herself small, she ducked, she darted hither and thither, but every resource was unavailing, and she was dragged by her captor into the middle of the room.

"Who is't!" cried many voices. "Ye'll have to say that," for they felt that a man who had lived eighteen years in London required instruction in village games. Newby pretended not to know, and Dunthorne had to stand by and see him pass his hateful hands over the girl's face and hair, as if the touch were the only sense on which he had to depend for identification. Dunthorne could have killed him.

"Why, it's Kitty! It's pretty little Kitty! I'll take my oath of it!" he cried at last, pulling off the handkerchief as he spoke.

"It is! It is! I knew I couldn't be deceived. Now, Miss Kitty, it's your turn to be blindfolded, and I'll be the one to do it."

Then in a leisurely fashion, he began to tie the bandage over her eyes.

It was part of the game, but it was not a part that Dunthorne relished, and it enraged him to see Newby throwing himself in Kitty's way at every turn when the game was once more in progress.

She seemed to be aware of this, for whenever her hand touched a man's coat, she tried to grasp a girl's dress to disappoint him.

"Fire, Kitty! Fire!" cried Dunthorne once when she was too near that danger.

She knew the voice, and, darting to the point from which it had come, caught a man who thrust himself in her way, and he was Newby.

"You've been catched twice running," said a man near. "Some one else mun be blinded."

"No! No! It's the fiddler's turn; we'll have a polka now," cried Newby, and Newby was in power.

"Dance it with me, Kitty," pleaded Dunthorne.

"That I would in a minute, but I'm engaged to Mr. Newby."

Dunthorne looked dismayed.

"There'll be other dances, I—"

"Then the next."

"It depends on what it is. I've promised Mr. Newby two polkas and one country dance."

"And that's about all the dancing there'll be. Games go down best here," said Newby, and then went to make some arrangement.

"Good-night, Kitty; I'm going home!"

"Oh, Robert, I didn't know you were coming," pleaded Kitty regretfully. "You never do come here."

"Come, Kitty," interrupted Newby; "let's waste no time."

"Get a partner, my lad," said old Mr. Newby. "With that music I could dance mysel'."

"In a minute," answered Dunthorne, but did not. Once or twice he fancied that Kitty was trying to stop to rest by the door where he was standing, but if so, her attempts were frustrated.

He went into the garden, which the moss roses he hated made so sweet. The moon was behind a dark cloud, so was everything else that he cared for, but the shufflings and scrapings and stumblings of the dancers, and their loud exclamations, made their way out to him. To escape the sight too, he went and leant against the wall by the door.

Presently Kitty and Newby came to the open window. See them, he could not, but he heard him say, "I must get another game up. Wait for me here."

"Oh, yes," she answered, "I am that tired—"

"Tired, Kitty? With you for a partner I could dance forever."

"Yes, tired," she persisted, "and hot too."

Some light was falling on a cluster of china roses just outside the window. For the sake of coolness, Kitty put her hand on them, and instantly found it taken into the grasp of another hand, the touch of which she knew well.

"Robert?" she whispered.

"Yes, get your things on, and let me set you home. You don't know how I'm feeling, and how I want to talk to you!"

"Now!!! There won't be another party for years!!!"

"Yes, now. Now, I beg of you. Oh, Kitty, come, my heart's set on 't."

"If I must, I must. Go to that seat by the gate, and I'll come after the game—I must stop for that."

"All right! Bless you for coming!"

"Sh'!" she whispered; so Newby was returning.

The game was over—now she would come!

The fiddle struck up Tullochgorum, and Robert looked in and saw her dancing. Another game began—he went to the dancing room.

How bright her eyes were! How rosy her cheeks! Games were for children, not for people with the game of life to play.

Next time he looked in, Newby, handkerchief in hand, was walking round a great circle of players, who were saying:

"King William was King David's son,
And all the royal race is run;
Choose from the East, and choose from the West,
Choose the one that you love best.
Salute your bride and kiss her sweet,
Then rise again upon your feet."

Dunthorne knew the game. Newby, of course, would drop that handkerchief at Kitty's feet. Kitty would then fly in and out under the outstretched arms of the ring of players, and he in and out after her, until he had caught and then kissed her.

That was what would happen, and rather than see it, Dunthorne fled—not to the seat this time, but home, pursued as he went by sounds of merriment.

Even before he reached Brigg End Cottage, however, he began to think he had acted foolishly, and something told him that Kitty would have come soon.

"I'll sit in the arbor in her grandmother's garden," he thought. "Some of the neighbors will see her to the gate and leave her there, and then I'll tell her all that's on my mind."

He waited for an hour before she and her escort came; he heard her say good night to them, but then he heard her say, "Good night, Mr. Newby. It has been a pleasant party!"

"It was a great deal more than that to me! Good-night. I'll come to tea to-morrow if I may?"

"Yes, do. There'll be no work going on, it's Sunday."

He went, and then Kitty looked for the big pansy plant under which the key of the house was hidden, and still Dunthorne kept to his resolution not to reveal his presence, but when the key was in the lock he strode out exclaiming:

"I was waiting for to speak to you, but I've nothing to say now! Good-night, and what's more, good-by!"

"Robert! What do you mean?"

"I mean that there need be no more talk betwixt us, that's all!"

"You're vexed I didn't dance with you; but I couldn't. He made me promise them dances afore I knew you'd be there."

Robert silently moved to the gate.

"How unjust! How was I to know you were coming? You've niver before set foot in that house, and as for the dancing, I had to keep my word!"

"You didn't keep your word about walking home with me!"

"They held me fast—they mocked me, and dancing is such a pleasure, and one has so little on 't!"

"It's not the dancing only—it's all you said and did, and are doing still!"

"Oh, go on! Say all the bad you can of me, and niver once think of the times out of mind to-night that I tried to get away from him and to you!"

"And now he's coming here to-morn, and not a word said again it by you! When I wanted to come, I was told to keep away! If I'd asked again to-night, it would have been no again. Mortal man can't stand what I have stooden; but never again! No, never again! You may have him here to-morn and every other day. It's nothing to me, for I'll never cross your doorstep as long as I live—no, not if you were to go down on your bended knees to ask me to come in!"

"I'm not likely to do that!" said Kitty proudly.

"Likely or unlikely, that's my last word."

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"My bairn! my bairn! what's ailing you? You're fading away before my very eyes!" said Mrs. Carter, four months later.

"Nothing's ailing me, granny—nothing at all."

"Niver tell me that! I've been young mysel' and know. It's a love trouble. Did that Newby mak' you think he would ax you to wed him and then sneak off with no word said? That's the clash i' the village."

"He did ax me and I said no. I wish I'd niver seen him!"

"It's Robert Dunthorne, then; he's worth fifty Newbys," was granny's thought, but she said, "It might do you good if you did a bit of work up at Dunthorne's now and then, same as before."

"I couldn't! Me and Robert's differed," said Kitty, and burst into tears.

"Mr. Dunthorne's my landlord. It's a queer thing that neither him nor Robert's ever been inside my doors."

"Many's the time that Robert's wanted to come; but that's months ago."

"And what for didn't he?"

"Because you were always saying you'd have no young men here."

"If you've young men you've love, and if you've love you've heart aches. That's why I said it. Eighteen was soon to begin."

"Granny, did your heart ever ache?"

"Aye, my bairn; so sore that I mind the soreness still."

Kitty kissed her, and henceforth there was another bond between them, but the old woman was silent.

"You're quiet, granny!" said Kitty.

"I'm a studying."

In the evening she was "studying" too, and after this, she who had always held that "girls were best at home," began to find daily errands for Kitty "down town," i. e., in the village.

When she returned Mrs. Carter "perused her face," but listless sadness was there when she went out and listless sadness when she came in.

"What would you do if you met Robert?" Mrs. Carter asked at last.

"Look another way, granny; but not because I didn't want to see him."

"You'd far better look at him, and hold out your hand too."

"If I did he wouldn't speak to me; but I'd die first."

"Granny," said Kitty after a long silence, "it seems a queer thing to ask a granny, but did you ever hear of a girl doing things to bring back the lad she liked—using charms, I mean?"

"Bairn, you mind of the time when I was a lass like you and your grandfather was a rackety lad who plagued me oft, and we had a quarrel which most got my life. I went to the wise woman and she tell't me—oh, but it is such foolishness!"

"Don't stop. Tell me what she said."

"She said that I was to tak' an onion and set it thick with pins, and for every pin I set in 't his heart would feel a prick of pain, and he'd go on from bad to worse till he was forced to come to me."

"And you did it?"

"Aye, I did it, and buried the onion—she tell't me to do that too, and said that let him strive agin it as he might, he'd be forced to come afore it pined away."

"And did he—did he?" cried Kitty, with dilated eyes.

"Well, honey, what think you? My name was Mary Mason then, and it very soon turned to Carter, like his."

Shortly after this Mrs. Carter observed a scarcity of pins, but no Robert came.

Christmas drearily dull, and when New Year's Eve came Kitty foretold that next day and every other day would be just as dowly.

"Happen you'll be wrong, my bairn. Anyhow, what our days are to be lies very much in our own power. Let's tak' care to get the luck on our side."

"But how?"

"Our first foot's the main thing."

"That's the milk boy, if he doesn't forget us."

"Forget us? You are determined to see things black! He's not failed us for two year, but I'll speak to him and mak' sure."

At four the boy came as usual, and Mrs. Carter said:

"You're our first foot, my lad. Come at seven to-morn, your Newry gift shall be ready for you."

The boy grinned and promised.

"If he sends his sister after all?"

"Ask who's there and keep the door shut till you know. He's fair-haired, that's right."

"All the fair-haired lads in the country side couldn't bring us luck," said Kitty dolefully.

"A lass would bring more ill-luck still."

"What else is there to do?"

"When you wake up in the morning, give a good happy laugh, for whatever you do on Newry's Morn you'll do all the rest of the year."

Kitty sighed.

"But you'll try?" pleaded the old woman.

"Aye, I'll try. I'll manage it somehow."

"Then, when you're up, you mun put this new money into yer pocket. It's a prisent from me, my honey, and there's a half a crown, a two shilling bit, a shilling, a sixpence, and a threepenny bit. It's all new, and I've been hoarding it up for months. If you keep it in your pocket all to-morn, you'll have bits o' money o' the same sort there all the year."

"Granny!" sobbed Kitty, "you're full o' thowt for me, and I've none for you!"

"You're my dear bairn! Now, that's two things I've got you tell't. Mind them! Whatever you do, let no lass cross our door-step, and gie nought out till something's taen in."

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Kitty remembered the laugh. Mrs. Carter heard it early in the morning.

"That's a good lass!" she cried. "Now put your money in your pocket."

That done, Kitty went down, lit the fire, and put on the kettle, and by that time Mrs. Carter was dressed.

"There's the milk!" cried Kitty. "I heard the gate clash."

"I'll tak' it in myself. I am so afeared of your making some silly mistake!" so said granny, and hurried off and from sheer nervousness was just going to open the door without asking a question, when Kitty sprang forward, drew her back, and cried through the keyhole:

"Who's there?"

"It's me."

"Who's me?"

"Bessie Clarke's young Bessie. Our Jack's been first-foot at so many places, and they've gien him so many sups of whisky amang them, that he's just staggered home and tumbled down on the floor. Father's thrashed him, and mother's putten him to bed, so I comed here i'stead."

Granny, who felt that Heaven itself was against her, uttered a terrible cry and fell noisily on the floor. Kitty screamed at the sight, and the child set the milk down and ran off to tell the first person she met that murder was going on at Brigg End Cottage, and nothing but screams were to be heard coming out of it.

Kitty meantime took her grandmother to the fire and put her on the long settle.

"To think of a lass coming this time of all others!" she lamented.

"We'll keep the door barred till a man comes by," said Kitty, to comfort her, but there was no doing that.

Ten minutes later quick steps were heard, and there was a knock at the door.

"Who's there?" cried Kitty.

"It is I—Robert Dunthorne. Little Bessie Clarke has just tell't me that something was amiss here and man's help was wanted."

When she heard his voice Kitty bowed her head and clasped it tightly in her hands, but she said:

"Will you come in, Robert?"

"Yes, if you will open the door."

"Thank you. Stay outside for a moment when I first opened it. Just stand where you are."

She opened it, and instantly knelt down on the threshold and said:

"I'll not be outdone by you, Robert. You tell't me that you would never enter this house—no, not even if I asked you on my bended knees, and I mocked at such a thought. Now you are willing to come in without any such asking, and I am asking you on my knees to do 't."

"Kitty!" he exclaimed, taking her by the hand and raising her to her feet. "My dearest Kitty!"

"Granny, here's your first foot! Here's Robert!" cried Kitty joyously, her hand still buried in her Robert's.

"I see him! I see him quite plain, but my poor old eyes mun be failing me, for I see no foot at all, and just three hands betwixt the pair o' you!"

Kitty smiled and blushed. Dunthorne said:

"And that's all you will see, I'm afeared, if I'm allowed to have my own way!"

AN ANECDOTE OF SCOTT.

When Sir Walter Scott was a schoolboy in Edinburgh he used to take great delight in a sort of warfare kept up between parties of boys who lived in different quarters of the town: they fought a good deal as the different "gangs" on the east side of New York fight nowadays, only that they were much less disturbed by the police than is the Bowery boy to-day, and also they had a great deal more good nature, and a higher sense of honor, as the story of "Green Breeks" shows. Rough as the play was parents and police were induced to tolerate it because the boys through it all behaved so well.

Little Walter Scott belonged to one faction, as they call themselves, and Green Breeks to another.

Walter's comrades were little swells, and Green Breeks headed a ragged crew, but neither side cared about that; they battled because they were two factions, not because they had anything against each other.

As they lived in different neighborhoods they knew nothing about each other, not even each other's names. Green Breeks was called so because he wore a pair of ragged breeches that had once been a part of a servant's livery.

He was a gallant leader, about 14, tall for his age, with blue eyes and fair hair. The battle took the form of one party driving the other out of invaded territory, turn and turn about. Green Breeks was always the first in the charge; the last in retreat.

Walter Scott's party had a flag that the lady who was then the Duchess of Sutherland had given them; at last in one furious charge the barefooted party sent all flying before them and Green Breeks well in front of all the rest got his hand on the enemy's flag; then the flag-bearer struck him on the head, and poor Green Breeks fell down senseless; this was not what had been intended at all, and was such an alarming accident that both sides fled in terror, leaving the boy lying on the pavement with his bright hair stained with blood.

The boy who had dealt the blow was wild with terror, and secrecy was sworn by all his party; that would have done him little good when Green Breeks came to, if Green Breeks had been minded to tell on him, but Green Breeks wasn't that kind.

He was taken to the hospital for a few days—the wound turned out a trifle after all—and argument and persuasion were tried on him to make him tell who struck him, but tell he would not, nor give any sign that could identify his enemy.

When he was around again Walter Scott and some of his friends opened up negotiations with him through a baker from whom, both sides bought ginger bread; they had scraped their pennies together and wanted to give him a sum of money to pay for his hurt.

But no, Green Breeks said he would not "sell his blood," any more than he would be a tell-tale.

After a good deal of diplomacy, the baker helping the proceedings, they got him to accept a pound of stuff for his grandmother.

The matter being settled, the two factions went joyously to fighting again—they liked that much better than being friends—and soon after Green Breeks slipped out of Walter Scott's ken, and he never heard of him again.

But to the end of his life, long after he became the great Sir Walter, he would tell this story, and amid festivities with old friends he would often propose a toast to his ancient and honorable enemy, Green Breeks.

AN HISTORIC CANNON.—The cannon which fired the last shot in the last battle of the last war is a gun worth knowing something about.

Hence, the sale of the 8-inch columbiad, "Lady Slocumb," which is advertised in the Mobile Register, arouses the interest of old soldiers and soldiers' sons.

"This last engagement," said an old soldier, "took place at Spanish Fort. This engagement, of course, was not a regular battle, and is not, perhaps, recorded in history as such, but it was, nevertheless, a fierce conflict.

"Gen. Forrest had sent to Spanish Fort during the last days of the war a sufficient force of men to guard the place, and among the number was the Fifth Battalion of the Washington Artillery, Capt. Cuthbert Slocomb in command.

"The Lady Slocomb was brought there, and there fired its last shots when Wilson's raiders stormed the place and took it. There the Lady Slocomb, for a few hours before the old fort was surrendered, belched forth fire and scattered death, but to no avail, as the enemy numbered several times as much as the garrison.

"After the surrender of the fort some of the members of Capt. Slocomb's command one night rolled the Lady Slocomb off the earthen embankment into a lagoon, or old slush hole, and buried it, giving as their reason that they did not want the gun to fall into the hands of the enemy.

"It was afterward dug up and carried to Mobile, where it was purchased by Henry Badger, a prominent Confederate of that place, who had served through the war and knew of the excellence of the Lady Slocomb."

The gun was named after the wife of Capt. Cuthbert Slocomb, who went out in 1862 in charge of the fifth Battalion of the Washington Artillery. The gun at the battle of Shiloh spat out its first smoke, and spead its desolation in the ranks of the enemy.

Through all the memorable struggles of the Army of the Tennessee it went, and everywhere it gained well-deserved renown. It was prettily mounted; and was at that time, as it probably is now, a handsome gun.

Now the old relic is to be sold. The estate of Henry Badger is being wound up, and the gun, along with other relics of the Confederacy, is to fall into the hands of others.

Years ago several efforts were made by the Washington artillery to buy the gun, and they will in all probability be heard from at the sale.

STORIES OF ELEPHANTS.—Several years ago a large bull elephant was captured by Cripps, the famous elephant taker of Ceylon.

The animal made a desperate struggle at first, but was finally captured and led into the corral by two elephants trained for the purpose.

The moment it entered the enclosure it sank upon the ground and apparently died of what the natives termed a broken heart. Every effort was made to restore the elephant.

It was treated by the doctors, pinched with spears by the mahouts, but all to no purpose, and it was finally deserted.

But the moment the natives reached a safe distance the wily beast sprang to its feet, and with exultant trumpeting rushed through the corral fence and into the forest where its cries of delight at the success of its ruse were heard for some time.

Mice will feign death to escape a cat, and even human beings at times adopt this ruse to escape from various enemies. Almost every great lion hunter has tried it with this animal, and often with success.

A famous elephant hunter was caught by a rogue elephant and tossed in the air, after which the ferocious brute attempted to kneel upon him and crush him; but the hunter did not move, realizing that it was his only salvation, and the elephant, thinking him dead, turned and ran into the brush.

One of the most remarkable instances of presence of mind on record was that shown by Selous, the African big game sportsman. He was caught by an enraged elephant, which he had wounded, and pinned to the earth by a tusk which cut through his thigh to the bone, tearing a gaping wound.

Selous retained consciousness and pretended to be dead. The elephant watched him closely for a few minutes to see if he was alive, then jerked his tusk from his body and the ground which it had penetrated, rose to his feet and staggered off to receive its death from friends of the plucky hunter who had not fired, fearing that the animal would fall and crush the wounded man.

THEY EAT FLOWERS.—A dinner of a bunch of rosebuds would hardly be called a feast, and we should most likely be inclined to think ourselves trifled with if we were asked to dine upon the great glowing blossoms of a rose-garden.

But in olden times some of the Indians, notably the Aztecs, esteemed these flowers, when properly cooked, a great dainty.

At the present day the natives of many parts of India depend for food upon the blossoms of the bassia-tree.

They do not even need to cook the flowers, but make a good meal of them raw, just as they gather them up under the trees, from which they fall in great quantities during the night. The blossoms are described as sweet and sickly in odor and taste.

Sometimes they are dried in the sun, and are then kept and sold in the bazaars as a regular article of diet.

The trees are so highly esteemed that the threat of cutting down their bassia-trees will generally bring an unruly tribe to terms.

This is hardly to be wondered at when it is understood that a single tree will yield from two to four hundred pounds of flowers. The Parsees cook the flowers, and also make sweetmeats of them.

NOTHING WASTED.—It has been said that a French family could live on what the average American family wastes. The thrift and economy that characterize the management of the household in France do not stop there. The same careful attention to detail permeates the whole industrial system.

A remarkable exemplification of this habit of minute attention to the crumbs and fragments that fall to the ground in the processes of manufacturing has lately been brought to public attention.

The lint from cotton and woollen rags, the hair from calf and kid skins used in glove-making, the refuse of silk, the sweepings of spinning and weaving mills, and the dust of silk, cotton, linen, hemp and jute, which gathers like down under beds, form a most unpromising jumble of waste substances.

A French manufacturer at Cours, however, skilfully blends these different products with raw cotton and wool, which is then carded and spun and woven with cotton woof into a material which he has named "renaissance."

It is made into coverlets, rugs, counterpanes, printed or died swanskin, flannels, curtains and portieres, table cloths, and furniture coverings. These articles are most skilfully died and dressed, and appeal to the eye of the purchaser.

GREAT MOSQUITOES.—Old Captain Blank of Stonington, relates the following remarkable incident that occurred while on the passage from New York some years ago.

He observed, one summer afternoon, a heavy cloud arise from the land, and, to his great surprise, approach the vessel. Suddenly it broke near him, and millions of mosquitoes covered the deck of the vessel to the depth of several inches, while part of the flock went through the mainsail, leaving nothing but the bolt ropes idly hanging to the spars.

Corroborative evidence to this astonishing tale was found in the person of a down-east skipper, who heard the story, and who, on comparing dates with the narrator, declared that two days afterward his ship was boarded by a part of the same flock, and they all wore canvas breeches.

GOOD sponges have grown steadily dearer of late years, and now the Cuban insurrection cuts off one source of supply. Since the rebellion so many of the fishermen are forced to serve on board ship that there are scarcely any left to go fishing.

At Home and Abroad.

It seems very odd to have unearthed the playthings as well as the tablets and weapons of antiquity: and yet among the objects found recently in the Assiob necropolis in Egypt was a whole company of wooden soldiers, fifteen inches in height. The soldiers carry lances, and give a good idea of the style of military equipment prevailing in the time of the Pharoahs. Many an American boy might enjoy playing with those toy warriors, as perhaps some Egyptian lad once did with utmost glee.

The next Paris Exposition will contain "A City of Gold." It will be an historical exhibition of the progress of banking. One section will show the processes for obtaining the precious metals, with models of the different kinds of mines; another will show the conversion of the metals into coin, and the workings of the mint; still another the progress of all kinds of commercial papers, with reproductions of historical banks from the Strozzi and Medici to the Rothschilds and the Bank of France. There will be a gallery of portraits of great financiers, and a reconstruction of the Pont au Change as it was in the middle ages, connected with streets representing various historical periods.

Congress appropriates between $40,000 and $60,000 annually for the current expenses of the Executive Mansion to meet clerk hire, including that of the President's private secretary, which is $6000 a year; stenographers, type-writers, telegraph operators, messengers, doorkeepers, a steward and housekeeper and light and heat, so that the President has the benefit of a sum nearly equal to his salary, and, though his income is less than that of the head of any Government which approaches the United States in size, with the contingent fund provided by Congress it is enough to enable him to live and entertain in a manner consistent with his high office.

Dr. Maillot, whose statue the French Minister of War will soon unveil at Briey, was the first surgeon to employ quinine in the French army. He made his experiments with the drug in Algiers. His greatest difficulty was to overcome the repugnance that fever patients felt for it. A surgeon who was attached to the staff of Dr. Maillot in Bone relates that once a soldier who appeared to be in the last stages of marsh fever begged the nurse with tears in his eyes to take away the "bitter powder," which he was sure was poison. Dr. Maillot dissolved the quinine in a glass of water. "You fool," he said, "will you take a drink with me?" and he swallowed half a tumblerful. The soldier, convinced that everything was all right, then drained the glass.

There is a curious custom at the Court of Spain on the day after Epiphany. On that day a royal coach, its six horses ridden by postilions and its coachman in state livery, drives from the King's palace to the palace of the Duke de Hijar. Inside the coach are a chamberlain and a valet, who have with them a large silver salver, upon which rests the suit of clothes the reigning king has worn upon Epiphany Day. This they solemnly present to the Duke de Hijar, who receives it as his right. The origin of this custom dates as far back as 1481. In that year a plot was laid to assassinate the then King, John XI., at the Epiphany Festival. Just before the plans of the murderers were to be carried into execution, the Count Ribadeo entered the hall, and after speaking a few words to the King the latter and the Count left the room together. The conspirators at once guessed that the Count had denounced them, and rising to a man, they forced their way into the King's bedroom, and killed the person they found there, who wore the same clothes as the monarch. But the King and the Count had exchanged clothes; and ever since, the suit worn by the Spanish sovereign on Epiphany Day, has been presented to the descendants of the Count Ribadeo, the present representative of the family being the Duke de Hijar. The Count's descendants have also the right to sit at the sovereign's table.

Deafness Cannot be Cured

by local applications, as they cannot reach the diseased portion of the ear. There is only one way to cure Deafness, and that is by constitutional remedies. Deafness is caused by an inflamed condition of the mucous lining of the Eustachian Tube. When this tube gets inflamed you have a rumbling sound or imperfect hearing, and when it is entirely closed Deafness is the result, and unless the inflammation can be taken out and this tube restored to its normal condition, hearing will be destroyed forever; nine cases out of ten are caused by catarrh, which is nothing but an inflamed condition of the mucous surfaces.

We will give One Hundred Dollars for any case of Deafness (caused by catarrh) that cannot be cured by Hall's Catarrh Cure. Send for circulars, free.

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Our Young Folks.

BALIN AND BALAN.

BY L. A. T.

BALIN and Balan were two brothers who lived with their father in a castle in the North Country.

They were brought up as noble children were in those days.

Every day they had lessons to learn; not from books and schoolmasters, for no one thought boys need have book-learning, but from their father and his old squire.

Instead of spelling and geography and arithmetic, they learnt how to ride and fight on horseback. Then they learnt to use a sword and a lance, and many a long morning they had spent in the castle hall while their father watched and taught them.

While he was there, he let them take down the old weapons from the wall and fancy themselves great knights; but when only old Morlon the squire was by, they had to be content with fencing sticks.

Then they learnt to be afraid of nothing. They went hunting in the woods and stood face to face with wolves and bears and wild horses, and felt that they were only children, it would be foolish to fear a brute beast, however strong.

One day they wandered away from the man-at-arms who was with them, and came upon a fierce old wolf. He stood right in the little green path they were walking along. The boys stopped and drew out their hunting knives.

"Do you think we had better run away?" said Balin.

"Or shall I blow my horn for Hue?" said Balan.

"No," said Balin; "I should not like to tell father we were afraid of a wolf. He's only like a wild dog; perhaps he will go away."

The great wolf was wondering why the children stood so still; but soon he grew impatient, and drew himself back to spring at them.

The boys stood fast, and Balin, who was the elder, tried to put Balan behind him. They both stared into the wolf's green eyes.

He was moving to and fro like a cat does before it springs on a mouse, and his hair stood up like a brush down his back; his green eyes began to have red flashes in them.

Then whiz! An arrow flew between the bushes and shot the great wolf dead; it was Hue!

How proud their father was of his two brave boys when Hue told him the story.

Another lesson they learnt was to be always courteous and polite, to wait on their elders, to take the weaker side, and not to care too much for their own pleasure. For their father used to say, "The ploughman has strong arms, and the butcher a sharp knife; but neither of them is a good knight for all that."

You may be sure these two boys longed for nothing so much as for the day when they would go to King Arthur's court.

There they would be squires at first, and follow some knight whom they could admire and love, to wait on him, sing to him, polish his armor, and to learn good and manly thoughts from him.

When the knight was riding on adventure, the squire would do everything for him: cook his dinner, keep his sword sharp, ride and sleep and fight by his side, and bring home his body at last if he were slain.

Then some day the squire would be thought worthy the honor of knighthood. He would put off the plain brown coat, and be dressed in the beauty garments of a knight, with the shirt of mail, and all the armor except the helmet, sword and shield.

Then the young squire would kneel before the king, and the king would lay his sword upon his shoulder, saying, "I dub thee knight, in the name of God and of St. Michael; be faithful, brave, and fortunate."

Then he would take the solemn vow to be faithful to his king and his conscience, and the gilded spurs would be buckled on and the sword girded round him, and he would be ready to ride out and fight with wicked men and savage beasts.

It is strange to think of men having to be always ready to fight.

Now King Arthur cared for nothing so much as making his country of England happy and peaceful. So Merlin and he thought of a plan.

Arthur had a most wonderful table in his castle, and round it he and his hundred knights used to sit every evening for supper. This table had once belonged to Joseph of Arimathea (the rich man, you know, who lent his own tomb to Jesus), and it had had many strange adventures before it came to Arthur.

Then he said, "My knights shall all be like brothers to one another, and I will call them 'The Fellowship of the Round Table,' and they shall all swear to be true and brave and merciful."

Any knight, you may be certain, would think it an honor to be one of the hundred chosen by the great king, and would be careful to live well and fight well, for fear he would forfeit his place, and see the gold letters in which his name was written on the back of his own seat, wiped off in disgrace and another knight's written there instead.

So every evening King Arthur used to sit at the round table to feast, and sometimes beautiful Guinevere sat by his side, and the ninety-eight knights (there were two seats not yet filled) round about it: then, if anyone was in trouble, or, specially, if he had had any wrong done him, he used to come to the king and ask him to send a good man to put it to rights, and one or other of the knights was bound to go on the "Quest" means "seeking."

Then when the knight had done the deed (or failed to do it) he was bound to come back and tell about it to the king and his fellows, so they dared not be mean or cowardly.

These were the things Balin and Balan thought and dreamed of every day.

One evening when they were growing big lads—Balin was fifteen—they were sitting with their father in the light of the great hearth, and behind them old Morlon and the men-at-arms were eating a noisy supper, the old knight turned to them and said—

"Listen to me, my sons. You are of age to leave home and learn what we cannot teach you in this quiet place, where you never see a knight but your old father."

How the boys' hearts beat when they heard that! Balan was beginning to speak, but Balin took his hand and they only stood together and looked hard at their father.

"I cannot spare you both," he went on; "I am old, and every man has enemies; one must stay with me and take his chance of knighthood later on. I thought to say Balin should stay, as he is the elder; but I see you are both of a size, so you shall choose for yourselves. Now, which of you wants to go to King Arthur's court to-morrow?"

Balin took a step forward, and began—

"Honored father——"

He paused, and Balan began—

"Honored father——"

Then Balin drew himself up and said—

"I will stay."

And Balin cried out—

"No; I will stay."

Their father laughed aloud, he was so glad of his unselfish sons.

"To-morrow evening you shall tell me," he said; "and the next day one of you shall ride with me to Caerleon."

The boys spoke no more until they were in their little bed room in the tower with the martin's nest over the window, and then they talked until their minds were quite made up; but I believe the little martins were awake and calling for flies before the brothers fell asleep, with their arms about each other. They had never lain apart since they were babies.

It was still early in the day when they were in the stables saddling Balan's horse. Then they saddled the mare for Balin, and rode out of the courtyard, out into the open country, towards the forest.

They had taken helmets and shields from the armory; but weapons they were forbidden to take, and carried instead the long staves of oak, fashioned like lances, which they used in their mimic jousts.

This joust was to be in earnest.

They had often heard how, when knights had a dispute, they settled it in Trial by Battle, calling upon God to defend the right cause, and so they had decided to do the same.

They soon reached an open glade, where they could canter well on the thick smooth grass.

Then they acted the part of heralds.

"Are you ready, Balin?"

"Are you ready, Balan?"

Then said Balan—

"I am ready, and may God defend my cause if He wishes me to go to Caerleon."

Then said Balin—

"I am ready, and may God defend my cause if He wishes me to go to Caerleon."

Then they laid their wooden lances in rest as they had been taught to do, and urged their horses forward. Balan's lance hit full on Balin's shield, but the mare winced from the old war-horse's lumbering charge, and Balin's lance went wide and never touched Balan at all.

Then Balin grew angry, and when they turned and charged again it was in a fierce fashion very different from the first.

Balin when he was angry was as strong as a man, and he roused the mare with a shout and bore down on Balan, catching his lance full on his shield, and thrust him clean out of his saddle to the grass.

In a moment he was standing by his brother, who had got up bewildered by his fall.

"You go, Balin," said Balan.

Now the anger was all gone out of Balin and he felt as if he had won unfairly; but the trial by battle was sacred, and he only said—

"It is decided."

So Balin went to King Arthur's court, and Balan stayed at home in the old castle in the North Country.

ELEPHANT HUNTING.—Colonel F. Spratt recently read a paper before the Camera Club, London, on "Elephant-hunting in the Nepaul Terrai," illustrating his remarks by photographs which were taken with a hand-camera from the back of an elephant.

Colonel Spratt is one of very few Europeans who have had an opportunity of joining in this magnificent and dangerous form of sport. The enterprise is organised for the amusement of the Maharajah, and takes place only once in about four years, else the forest would be denuded of the big game.

A small army, consisting of about five thousand men, and perhaps three hundred elephants, and a few horses, take part in the hunt, and they carry tents and provisions just as if a campaign against a powerful enemy were in progress.

When the pad marks of an elephant are found, he is steadily tracked down, and as soon as he is found, a trained fighter of his own species is urged against him.

As a rule, he steadily retreats upon sight of his pursuers, and their object is to press him so as to tire him out. He then stands at bay, and the tug-of-war commences.

The opposing animals butt at one another with the heads down, and should one show his flank, he is quickly brought to earth.

When finally conquered, the wild elephant is pressed by his pursuers towards water, of which he is so much in need after his exertions that his hind legs can be shackled as he drinks.

He is then kept attached by ropes to other elephants until he gradually gets accustomed to bondage, and in a few months he is completely under control. The sport is a bloodless one, and the elephants when captured are most kindly treated.

SWIFTER THAN BIRDS.—It is a popular belief that the flight of birds is much swifter than that of insects; but a number of naturalists who have been making a study of the matter think that such is not the case.

A common house fly, for example, is not very rapid in its flight, but its wings make 300 beats a second, and send it through the air 26 feet, in ordinary circumstances, in that space of time.

When the insect is alarmed, however, it has been found that it can increase its rate of speed to over 160 feet per second. If it could continue such rapid flight for a mile in a straight line it would cover that distance in exactly 33 seconds.

It is not an uncommon thing, when traveling by rail in the summer time, to see a bee or a wasp keeping up with the train.

A swallow is considered one of the swiftest of flying birds, and it was thought until recently that no insect could escape it.

A naturalist, however, tells of an exciting chase he saw between a swallow and a dragonfly, which is among the swiftest of insects.

The insect flew with incredible speed, and wheeled and dodged with such ease that the swallow, despite its utmost efforts completely failed to overtake and capture it.

DECISION and promptitude, even though sometimes a man may err for want of due deliberation, will, in the long run, more often conduct to success than a slow judgment that comes too late.

GENERAL tidiness not only pays on its own account, but because to be tidy is to be economical.

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

About 69,000 elephants are annually killed in Africa.

Half of the coffee crop of the world is grown in Brazil.

Among the English nobility 19 per cent. are childless.

Forests cover one-third of the land surface of the earth.

A coin is in currency on an average for twenty-seven years.

Deafness does not tend to shortness of life. Deaf people live as long as others.

Electricity has lately been applied to cure stammering, with complete success.

The state ring of the Pope is set with a large cameo bearing a portrait of Christ.

In London there are said to be $10,000,000 worth of umbrellas made every year.

The silk industry of China employs, it is estimated, from 4,000,000 to 5,000,000 people.

In France the doctor's claim on the estate of a deceased patient has preference over all others.

About 2,000 sailing vessels disappear in the sea every year, entailing the loss of 12,000 human lives.

In Germany wreaths of elder are hung up after sunset on Good Friday as charms against lightning.

The largest cast bronze statue in the world is that of Peter the Great at St. Petersburg. It weighs 1,100 tons.

The making of cod-liver oil is an important industry at Christiania. The quantity exported last year was 70,000 barrels.

The most effective Krupp gun has a range of seventeen miles, and can fire at the rate of two shots a minute.

"To be in a brown study" is said to be a corruption of "brow study," a study requiring much thought and contraction of the brows.

Scientists say that the hand loses the delicacy of its dexterity after forty years, while the brain is not ripe for its best work before that.

A naturalist who sewed bits of red silk on swallows caught in England, identified one of the same birds in the neighborhood of the Pyramids.

Alum in bread may be detected by heating a knife-blade and thrusting it into the loaf. Its presence will be shown by small specks on the blade and a faint peculiar odor.

It is not generally known that we owe the juvenile string game called "cat's-cradle" to the Maoris of New Zealand, for they have played it for centuries, only in a complicated fashion.

The Patent Office at Washington actually has a printed circular to send to inventors of machines for "perpetual motion," pointing out that the thing is an impossibility.

The population of London is about six millions, and last year the number of murders in this vast community was only thirteen, of which seven were due to insanity.

In Burmah it is the woman who does the wrong. Not only does she select her own husband, but when she tires of him she gets a divorce by merely asking for it, and marries anew.

Sedan-chairs were common in London in 1830. They were even in use in Edinburgh and Peterborough until 1860; and it is said that one was to be met with at Bury St. Edmunds until five years ago.

The secret marks on Bank of England notes, by which forgeries are so rapidly detected, are constantly being changed. The microscope will reveal many such peculiarities to an observant eye.

In India telegraphic despatches are headed "After compliments," the receiving operator writing out a set complimentary formula established by the telegraph company, which is indispensable in Oriental countries.

An apron is the royal standard of Persia. Gos, a Persian who was a blacksmith, by trade, raised a revolt which proved successful, and his leather apron, covered with jewels, is still borne in the van of Persian armies.

Among the latest patents which have been given the world is a door knob which renders a latch-key superfluous. By rotating the knob in the same manner as a safe lock until the proper combination is secured, the door can be opened.

A medical paper prints statistics showing that in eight of our largest Southern cities the proportion of deaths from consumption among the colored race, as compared with the total mortality, is more than 50 per cent. greater than that of the white population.

Noble county, Indiana, claims as citizens four unique characters. It has within its borders the smallest married couple in the United States, and also the largest and smallest men from a physical standpoint in Indiana; the former weighs 560 pounds, the latter is but 3 feet 3 inches in height and weighs only 75 pounds.

AUTUMN.

BY LONGFELLOW.

Thou comest, Autumn, heralded by the rain,
With banners, by great gales incessant fanned,
Brighter than brightest silks of Samarcand,
And stately oxen harnessed to thy wain!
Thou standest, like imperial Charlemagne,
Upon thy bridge of gold; thy royal hand
Outstretched with benedictions o'er the land,
Blessing the farms through all thy vast domain;
Thy shield is the red harvest moon, suspended
So long beneath the heavens' o'erhanging eaves,
Thy steps are by the farmer's prayers attended;
Like flames upon an altar shine the sheaves;
And, following thee, in thy ovation splendid,
Thine almoner, the wind, scatters the golden leaves!

ABOUT OLD PIPES.

Whether the honor of having introduced tobacco into England, from whence it spread to America, among the colonists, belongs to Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir John Hawkins, or to Mr. Ralph Lane, sometime Governor of Virginia; or whether the claims of the colonists of Virginia (brought back by Drake in 1586), or of Captains Amidas and Barlow (of Sir Walter's first expedition in 1584), to the same distinction can be definitely adjusted, one thing is certain—namely, that smoking was undoubtedly indulged in before the arrival of the famous "weed."

Long before the period of the introduction of tobacco, herbs and leaves were smoked for medicinal purposes, and to this day, in some parts of England, colt's-foot, yarrow, and other plants are still used in the same way, with evident relish and belief in their efficacy.

Of the pipes of the ante-tobacco period, we know little or nothing; the earliest specimens to be found in collections dating from the time of Queen Elizabeth, during whose reign tobacco was introduced.

That tobacco-pipes were manufactured at an early date in that country, is proved by the incorporation of the craft of tobacco-pipe makers in 1619 by James I., in the seventeenth year of his reign, and their privileges were confirmed both by Charles I. and Charles II. The Pipemakers' Company consisted of a master, four wardens, and about twenty-four assistants.

Hentzer, a German lawyer and traveler, who visited England in Queen Elizabeth's reign, was much astonished to see Englishmen "draw the smoke into their mouths (through pipes of clay), which they puff out again through their nostrils like funnels."

The pipes of this period have very small barrel-shaped bowls, and are usually of a better clay and make than those of succeeding reigns. In the time of James I. and Charles I., the bowls slightly increased in size, but the form remained pretty much the same.

These ancient pipes, so often turned up by the spade during digging or draining operations, are called by the country-people in England "fairy pipes," and in Scotland "Celtic" or "Elfin pipes;" whilst by the Irish peasantry they are attributed to mischievous demons, named "Cluricaunes," and are destroyed as soon as discovered. In England, however, they are carefully preserved, the rustics firmly believing that they bring good luck to the finder.

The pipes in vogue during the Commonwealth and the reigns of Charles II. and James II., still retained the barrel-shaped bowl, but in an enlarged form. Some of these early pipes are furnished with a projection, having a flat base, which enables the pipe when placed on the table to remain in an upright position. This flat base or "spur," as it is termed, is often stamped with the maker's mark, of which marks there is a large variety.

Sometimes the name of the maker is stamped in full; at other times it is abbreviated, whilst more frequently we find the initials only, or a device. A favorite mark is a wheel, in a variety of forms, which suggests the probability of St. Catherine being the patron saint of the company.

On some of the pipes the initials S. D. (supposed to be those of Samuel Decon, who was living in 1729) occur, together with a gauntlet; and seeing that Aubrey (1680) describes pipes made in his time by a maker named Gauntlett, who marked the spurs with a gauntlet, from which they were called Gauntlet-pipes, it is thought that Decon might have learned the art of pipe-making from him, adopting the mark and adding his own initials.

Aubrey also states that pipes were made of silver, and for ordinary purposes of a walnut-shell and straw; these were passed around from smoker to smoker.

During the years of the Great Plague (1644 to 1666) smoking increased to a very considerable extent owing to a general belief in tobacco as a disinfectant. A large number of the pipes found in London belong to this period.

That most entertaining diarist, Pepys, relates how, on seeing some houses in Drury Lane (the 7th of June 1665) marked with the red cross and the pitiful prayer, "Lord, have mercy upon us," he was so much upset that he went into a tobacconist's close by, and purchased a pound of tobacco, not to smoke, it is true, but to "smell to and chaw." A few years later, the short pipe, known in Ireland as the "dudeen," and in Scotland as the "cutty-pipe," was in use at the same time as the ordinary barrel-shape with long stem. Barrel-shaped pipes ceased to be the fashion with the reign of James II., when the elongated bowl of the time of William and Mary came into favor.

A number of these pipes have been found on the site where the troops of William III. encamped, previous to their embarkation for Ireland; and also on the battlefield of the Boyne at Dunkirk, conclusively proving the period of their production.

These long-bowled pipes with curved stems may be seen in the pictures of Franz van Mieris, a Dutch painter, who flourished in the latter half of the seventeenth century. Hogarth in his drawings depicts the favorite form of pipe of the reigns of Queen Anne and George I. With the introduction of the Dutch type of tobacco-pipe the flat-spur disappeared, as did the barrel-shaped bowl, to be succeeded by one of more prominence if of less utility, and makers' marks and initials are stamped upon the sides of the spur instead of on the base.

Old tobacco-pipes are usually plain, with the exception of a milled border impressed by hand running round the mouth. Ornamental pipes are occasionally found, but are very rare. Pipes were also made of iron and brass in the reign of William III., but were not commonly used.

Grains of Gold.

No sin is so little that it may not become the soul's master.

The children of a millionaire can only be slightly acquainted with their father.

The only amaranthine flower on earth is virtue; the only lasting treasure is truth.

A poor man with a sunny spirit will get more out of life than a wealthy grumbler.

As much bitterness and hate can be expressed in a word, as can be fired out of a gun.

A good man finds good wherever he goes, because the good in him brings out good in others.

It is not what we have, but what we do with what we have, that proves our fitness for promotion.

Look at it this way: The world and everything in it is yours to help you make a true man of yourself.

If we are unsympathetic and selfish, we exclude ourselves from many of the greatest and purest joys of life.

Cultivate the habit of always seeing the best in people, and, more than that, of drawing forth whatever is the best in them.

Femininities.

Helen Keller, the deaf, dumb and blind girl, now rides a wheel. It is a tandem, and her companion steers.

A little borax added to the water in which flannel and other woollen goods are washed, keeps the texture soft.

Lavender, though pleasant to place with linen, should not be put with anything woollen, as it is apt to harbor moths.

Half a quince cut up is a great improvement in the flavor of apples in a tart, and can be bought for a penny each.

Corns are sometimes cured by having placed on them for a few hours a piece of boiled potato skin, the potato part next to the corn.

Before using flour for pastry or puddings, put it for a few minutes in the oven to dry. This makes it lighter and more digestible.

It is said that the typewriting machine ordered in Paris by the Czarina has type bars of gold, while the frame is inlaid with pearls, her Majesty's favorite gems.

Hot-water bottles are apt to make the skin of the feet tender. Loose woollen socks are better for those who suffer from cold feet at night. The warmth often induces sleep.

Parsley may be preserved for the winter by hanging it up to dry, or drying it in a cool oven. Put it into a paper bag or glass bottle, and keep it in a dry cupboard till wanted.

She: Here comes Masher; why is he so cold to you now? He: Because he tried to cut me out with the girl I've since married. She: But why are you so savage with him? He: Because he didn't succeed.

Divorce is easily accomplished in Cochin China. The man and wife who are eager to separate assemble a few friends, and in their presence break a couple of chopsticks, when the divorce is secured.

He sat silent and constrained for a considerable time. "I cannot," he exclaimed at last, "find words in which to tell my love for you." She pondered deeply. "That is certainly singular," she said, not unkindly. "What dictionaries have you consulted, may I ask?"

For cleaning silver when dirty, mix a little rouge with spirits of wine in a saucer, rub on the mixture with a clean piece of rag, then polish off with a leather. This is a silversmith's recipe and is of proved value. Do not however mix too much at a time, as it dries quickly.

In South Africa the savage tribes have a peculiar ceremony which they put the matrimonial candidate through previous to his entering the holy estate. His hands are tied up in a bag containing fire-ants for two hours. If he bears unmoved the torture of their stings, he is considered qualified to cope with the daily jars and frets of married life.

Mrs. Ormiston Chant has conceived a new scheme in her crusade against the London music halls. She has written a number of edifying and perfectly harmless songs which she wants to have the proprietors of the halls use on their stages. The scoffing newspapers say that her scheme, if adopted, will speedily prove fatal to the music halls.

A New Zealander recently had the audacity to bring suit for divorce against his wife on the ground that she was nearly always away from home on her bicycle, thereby neglecting her domestic duties. This, he contended, was "habitual desertion" within the meaning of the Act. But the suit was decided against him, and the married lady cyclists of New Zealand breathe more freely.

Making soap-bubbles is a great amusement to children and will keep them employed a whole afternoon. Prepare, beforehand, a mixture of curd soap cut into small pieces and boiled three or four minutes in a pint of water, when cool add an ounce of glycerine, put it in a tightly corked bottle and keep some hours before using. The bubbles made with this preparation are very brilliant in color.

For an invalid's fire-place, when noise is to be avoided, place turf or clods of dry grass, root upwards, under the grate and about the fire-place. If a coal or cinder fall there will then be no noise. Use a wooden poker. It is not only less noisy than a steel one, but if your fire is low you can leave it in for a few minutes and it will revive the fire. Keep a house-maid's glove on the edge of the fender with which to put on coals. If the coals are wrapped in paper, as is often advocated, the paper is apt to make a blaze. A wooden box is better than a metal scuttle for use in a sick room.

Mrs. Blank gave a luncheon some little time ago to her fellow-members of the X Club. They are all literary and, as women go, very good friends. Sometimes, however, the iron hand spans itself beneath the glove. There was ice-cream for dessert, and the hostess noticed that one of her guests had eaten all her portion.

"Dear Miss X," said she, "do let me give you some more ice-cream."

"Well," replied Miss X diffidently "just a mouthful, if you please."

"Mary," said the hostess to the maid, "fill Miss X's plate."

Masculinities.

Love is dead when the husband begins to grudge the money it takes to support his wife.

There is a clerk in Marne, France, who has made seventeen unsuccessful attempts to commit suicide.

A young man at Munchberg, Germany, tried to escape military service by disguising himself as a female cook.

Winks: Do you believe in hypnotism? Binks: Of course I do. Don't you see this necktie that the clerk induced my wife to buy the other day?

The man who is always wondering what the neighbors think of him would be surprised sometimes to know that they seldom think of him at all.

More than 10,000 persons are engaged in the manufacture of explosives in England. Last year forty persons in the business were killed and 167 injured by accidents.

"This," said the lovely lady, displaying the locket, "is a lock of my husband's hair." "Pulled out?" inquired the cynical bachelor and a coldness fell on the conversation.

When a graduate of Cambridge University, England, commits a crime the authorities of the University take his degree from him and strike his name from the rolls of the alumni.

A bronze monument has been erected in Paris to the memory of Jean Leclaire, the man who fifty-four years ago introduced among the workmen of his factory the system of profit-sharing.

From some reason unexplained, marriages in Ireland last year went up with a bound. In the past decade there had not been 23,000 marriages in any year, but last year the total rose to 23,130.

Governor Hogg, of Texas, denies the statement that he has children named Ima, Ura and Shesa. He has a daughter who is named Ima, and three boys named respectively William, Michael and Thomas.

Little four-year-old Cora did not want to learn to read, and her mother asked her what she would do if she was unable to read when she grew up. "I'll get my husband to read to me," was the reply.

Mrs. James Neilson, a charitable woman of New Brunswick, N. J., has started a manual training night school for the purpose of keeping youths off the street; and the project has won immediate success, young and old being equally delighted with the idea.

First lady: Do you know where the custom of mothers taking their marriageable daughters to the watering places originated? Second lady: I have no idea. First lady: Well, it dates back to the days of Abraham. You know it was at a well that Rebecca found her husband.

It is a somewhat singular fact that a person's nose is very seldom found exactly in the middle of the face. Taking 100 heads at random, there will not be more than three in which the bridge of the nose descends perpendicularly from a straight line drawn exactly between the eyes.

Dr. Burton Ward, according to the Medical Age, declares that there "is one infallible symptom indicating whether one is sane or not. Let a person speak ever so rationally and act ever so sedately, if his or her thumbs remain inactive there is no doubt of insanity. Lunatics seldom make use of their thumbs when writing, drawing or saluting."

Some efforts in a fresh direction to popularise the pulpit are being made in Australia. After the sermon the congregation in one of the Victorian churches are invited to give their views upon it, and argue doubtful points with the preacher. They therefore come armed with pencil and note-book, and as soon as he has finished the church is turned into a debating society.

The Austrian Archduke John, who became a sea captain, adopting the name of John Orth, and is supposed to have been lost at sea several years ago, left 1,000,000 francs on deposit in a bank in Freiburg, and another million in St. Gallen, Switzerland. The relatives of his wife, who disappeared at the same time, have now put in a claim for the money. Frau Orth was a Viennese woman named Stubel.

An interesting relic of George Washington is the little cabin in Clarke county, Virginia, which was used by him when, as a young man, he surveyed the lands of upper Virginia. The hut which is only twelve feet square, contains two rooms, one on the ground floor and the other an attic, which is reached by a ladder. In this Washington was accustomed to keep his instruments when on a surveying expedition. The hut is rapidly falling into decay.

"You love my daughter?" said an old man.

"Love her!" he exclaimed, passionately. "Why, sir, I would die for her! For one soft glance of those sweet eyes I would hurl myself from yonder cliff, and perish, a bleeding, bruised mass, upon the rocks, two hundred feet below."

The old man shook his head.

"I'm something of a liar myself," he said, "and one is enough for a small family like mine."

Latest Fashion Phases.

Violet canvas, with a bodice of flowered mauve silk, folled back and front, makes a pretty gown, and the vest, belt and collar should be of violet velvet, with cream lace in the neck and a jabot end falling over the vest. Violet silk plaiting may finish the edges of the bodice down the front.

Tan cloth gowns add to the variety of colors used this season. One specially effective design has a tight under bodice of black velvet and a bolero of cloth with a pointed collar. A yoke of finely tucked white cloth extends across the front, and the black velvet bodice forms a vest below which is edged with green and black braid. The skirt opens at the seams across the front to show pointed pieces of black velvet where it is buttoned across with green and black braid, and two pieces of velvet of the same shape fall below the waist at the back.

Another stylish model in a dark, rich shade of red plum shows a bodice of figured silk in which yellow predominates, and a jacket of cloth like the skirt, with a round collar of yellow silk covered with velvet and jetted cream lace. Buttons and cords trim the front of the jacket and black velvet forms the belt.

Gowns of black canvas woven with a thread of violet tinsel, with a violet velvet bodice, are very pretty and matronly looking costumes. One displayed among the imported dresses has a plain back and is crossed over in front below the bust, where it fastens with hand-painted porcelain buttons. Two pointed revers turn back above, over a vest of point d'Angleterre lace, and are edged with fur.

Among the trimming silks the moire and glace silk are conspicuous. The latter have a moire wave, but also a glossy surface that deepens the color in the folds, and are more youthful in effect than the usual moires. Very thin stuffs are mounted over these, with perhaps a belt of the silk. On slender figures skirts slashed in the side breadths and filled in with falls of lace are charming.

For many seasons past if a gown was made with revers the number used was always two. Invariably these revers were an exact counterpart of each other. Not only in coloring and design were they alike, but they were the same size and placed on the gown directly opposite one another.

Now the best dressmakers are no longer partial to two revers. Either one or three are used on the most fashionable gowns.

One large rever is regarded as very chic. It is usually of the same material as the bodice, and is richly braided or covered with lace.

When three revers are used they are always graduated in size. The first rever is the smallest, the other two acting as its background.

They look best in three tints of one color, but all sorts of very pretty color effects are possible with them.

The variety in coats and jackets this season exceeds anything ever known before, and colored cloth and velvet coats are worn with as many different gowns as though they were black. The full sack, hanging in plaits from the shoulder back and front, is one of the fashionable shapes, and the latest cut in this style of garment is very short, reaching only two or three inches below the waist.

Some of these loose coats are made with panels separate from each other, and one pretty style is slashed in front to show the under bodice, and braided around the edges.

Loose coats of black velvet are very stylish on the right figure, but for those who cannot wear the shape there are little jackets of velvet fitted close on the shoulders and pulled just a trifle at the waist into an embroidered belt. Wide revers of chinchilla point down to this belt in front, and a full jabot of cream lace falls between. Bishop sleeves finished at the wrist with a cuff of fur which falls over the hand are seen in some of these coats, and a small gigot sleeve is also worn. Cloth jackets with fitted backs and loose fronts are better suited to the average figure, and quite as good style. Braiding in every degree of elaboration is used for their decoration, and a last season's coat can be freshened up to date by braiding the edges all around and reducing the sleeves.

A wonderfully effective and warm garment is made of scarlet cloth, falling in loose, straight, full folds, and is adorned with a deep cape, on which, in addition to an edging of white Thibet goat fur, there are tapering bands of embroidery in white silk and the finest silken cord. The turned down collar and cuffs are ornamented in the same way.

If you want to do full justice to this pretty coat you should crown it with a hat of red felt, the brim bound with black, and the Tam o' Shanter crown held in by a band of black velvet, fastened with a steel buckle, through which are thrust three white quills.

A charming pelisse for a baby boy about 2 years old is made of pure white corded silk, which makes a very effective background for a border trimming of golden otter. The double-breasted front is fastened with pearl buttons, and a band of silk also assists in holding the little coat in place. A little girl the same age can be made to look lovely in a pelisse of pale yellow corded silk, with a soft trimming of white ostrich feather bordering the collar and shoulder capes, and dividing the puffs of the sleeves from the plain cuffs.

A boy of 4 looks chic in a velveteen tunic with a white leather belt and a sailor collar and shirt of tucked white batiste, trimmed with embroidery.

A serviceable long coat for schoolgirls who need a wrap to cover the dress entirely and keep it dry on wet days, is in a very simple sacque shape, and may be made in waterproof serge or tweed, and is simply stitched round the edges. The back has a seam in the centre and the front has rounded revers. The sleeves are cut in the leg o'mutton shape.

A short jacket for a small girl is very stylish made loose in front and only semi-fitting at the back. The revers, pocket flaps and cuffs are edged with two rows of stitching. It looks well in either plain or mixed woollens.

A nice little coat for a girl 8 or 9 years old is of pale tan cloth loosely plaited both at the back and front, and the collar is cut out in tabs overlaid with dark brown velvet and bordered with the cloth. Beneath this comes a cape of the velvet, doubly bordered with strappings of cloth, and enriched with a bold design of cloth appliqué. The gigot sleeves have flaring cuffs of the velvet with two rows of cloth forming a border.

The hat to be worn with this coat is in tan cloth sewn with encircling lines of white, and trimmed with a band of brown satin ribbon, with loops of the same and quills to match at the left side.

A pretty coat is in fine cloth of a bright shade of blue. The back and front of this coat are also loosely plaited, and is adorned with a pointed shoulder cape which is enriched with a delicate embroidery of shaded sequins, and edged with a ruche of finely plaited blue satin ribbon. The collar and cuffs are treated in the same manner, and the sleeves are cut in the bishop shape.

The hat is of blue felt, trimmed with a band and rosettes of ivory satin ribbon.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

There are a few golden rules of housekeeping which every woman ought to always bear in mind:

Be cleanly, be regular, and never suffer an inferior article to come into your larder—poor ones are always the dearest in the long run.

In making coffee, clear it with isinglass, and not with eggs; and serve with it, in addition to the ordinary jug of boiled milk, a small pitcher of cream.

Do not cover jam, except with rounds of tissue-paper, dipped in brandy and pressed close upon the top of each pot. If the preserve has been properly made—that is, equal weights of sugar and fruit, and boiled sufficiently—it will keep well for twelve months without being what is termed "covered down;" of course, we mean provided it be kept in a dry place.

Broil steak without salting, as salt draws the juices; and cook over a hot, clear fire, turning frequently with tongs.

Beef which has a tendency to be tough can be made tender by stewing very gently for two hours, with pepper and salt, letting out about a pint of liquid when done, and allowing the remainder to boil into the meat. After taking up, make gravy of the liquid saved. If your cooking fire is slow, throw on a little salt—it will help it very much.

In making pastry, do not spare butter; and let it be of the very best.

In icing cakes, dip your knife frequently into cold water.

An effectual way of getting rid of cockroaches is to place cut slices of cucumber over the floor they frequent at night. They devour this greedily, and it destroys them.

A watch should be wound in the morning and not, as it is usually done at night. The mainspring is relaxed at night, but if wound in the morning remains close and tight all day.

Egg-shells are porous and absorb unpleasant odors; they should be kept in a clean cool place, and not near cheese or any strong smelling thing.

Raw potato with a little bathbrick will remove stains from steel knives and forks, and stains can also be taken out of tinware and brass in the same way.

If stung by a bee or other insect, and no other remedy is near, a plaster of wetted earth or even a piece of damp turf laid on the place has been known to effect a complete cure.

To peel ripe tomatoes, put them into a frying basket and plunge into boiling water for a second or two, to loosen the skins; this is a better way than to pour boiling water over them.

Paper bags are made of a compound of rags, lime and glue mixed with chemicals and acids. When dry these do no harm; but articles of food should not be left in them if damp.

When removing a cake from the oven where it has been baked, place the tin on a damp towel for a moment and the cake will come readily out.

Essence of penny-royal effectually keeps away mosquitoes and gnats, the odor is a powerful one, and they will not come near it.

Use soapy water in making starch, the clothes will look more glossy, and the iron will be less likely to stick.

Tumblers that have contained milk should not be washed in hot water, as it clouds the glass permanently,

A tin cup filled with vinegar and placed on the back of the stove will prevent the smell of cooking over the house.

All clothes worn out of doors should be carefully brushed before being put away, and black materials are improved by being occasionally sponged with a weak solution of ammonia in water. Face veils also after being worn some time are the better for this treatment.

Great care should be taken in warm weather that the milkman or the cook do not put boracic acid in the milk that is used by children or even grown-up people. It is a well-known preservative, but unless used very sparingly it is highly injurious to health,

Brooms put into boiling water once a week and then plunged into cold water will become tough and durable, lasting twice as long as those not treated thus, will sweep better, and will not cut the carpet.

One of the best things for cleaning patent leather is the French harness polish, to be got from any saddler. Rub it on lightly, then rub it up with a piece of black cloth. Patent leather so treated never cracks.

When a large quantity of tea cake or toast has to be served buttered, melt sufficient butter in a flat tin over the stove, and when hot and melted dip each piece of cake or toast on a fork into the butter lightly. The work of buttering is done in this way in about half the time usually spent when spreading it with a knife.

If a fire is wanted to burn up quickly, place the blocks of coal with the grain upwards towards the chimney, but if wanted to burn slowly place the coal with the grain across the fire.

To remove ink stains from table linen pour fresh milk upon it till the stain is quite out, but if no milk is at hand and the ink has got dry, boil some milk in a saucepan, dip the stained linen into the milk, and keep dabbing it till it comes out. Another plan is to cover the stain with salt and place a slice of lemon on it, and leave it for a few hours. This will not destroy the fibre of the linen as salt of lemon does.

For faceache or toothache an outward application of moist heat is a great relief, but not dry heat. If you have earache do not sleep on that side of your face, it sends the blood to the ear, where it should not be.

To make pancakes in the French fashion, prepare the batter in the usual way do not be stingy with the eggs. Put a piece of butter in a saucepan, and melt it. Get a piece of stick and tie a nice clean piece of rag round the end of it, and leave it in the melted butter. Take the pan in which you are going to make your pan cakes, and put it on the fire dry. When quite hot take the stick from the melted butter and thoroughly paint the dry pan with it, then pour in the batter. This plan will make the pancakes lighter than the ordinary way, and is more economical. The pan must be freshly painted with butter before each pancake is made.

Fried Potatoes.—Fried potatoes are best cut in finger-lengths, and about the thickness of a little finger. Drop them in boiling fat, and let them cook very quickly. They should be crisp and well-browned, but not burnt.

Potatoes Souffle.—This is a French chef's recipe. Peel, wash and dry some nice potatoes, cut them in slices half the thickness of a finger. In a saucepan place some clarified frying-fat, as soon as it is melted put the potatoes into it; as soon as the skin begins to blister lift the potatoes out with a strainer and drop them at once into another pan containing more fat that is boiling hot. They will then become souffle directly, or puffed. Take them out into a strainer, dust them with salt, and serve immediately, as they very quickly fall.

Potatoes Sautees.—Peel, slice in rounds not more than a quarter of an inch thick, in a wide but shallow frying-pan, place about two ounces of cooking-butter or dripping, let it frizzle, then put in the potatoes (not more than enough to just cover the bottom of the pan), turn them over several times that both sides may be equally colored. When lightly browned, sprinkle them with pepper and salt and chopped parsley.

Potatoes a la Duchesse.—Very mealy potatoes are the best for this dish. Peel four of them, and boil or steam till thoroughly tender, drain and mash finely. Add to the mashed potato two tablespoonfuls of potato flour, a teaspoonful of salt, half one of pepper, a spoonful of finely minced or dried and sifted parsley, and a beaten egg. Mix well, then take up a teaspoonful at a time, shape into little rolls and dip first in beaten egg, then in fine breadcrumbs or raspings, and fry to a golden brown in boiling fat. Drain and arrange on a dish by themselves garnished with parsley, or make a garnish of them around a stew of meat or roasted steak. Delicious also to serve with cutlets.

What is quassia wood, and why is it so useful in destroying vermin?—The quassia chips of commerce are the heart wood of a tree which grows in tropical America. The wood is dried and the split into billets and exported. Before being sold it is broken up into small fragments, which are of a pale yellow color with a well-marked grain and very soft and friable. The wood is inodorous but possesses an intense bitter taste, on which account it is used in medicine as a bitter and tonic. It is used to destroy vermin chiefly in woodwork, and was formerly much used to scrub wooden bedsteads; for this purpose the wood is placed in hot water, about one part of the wood by weight to forty parts of hot water, roughly about a quarter-of-a pound of the chips to a pail of hot water, and the floors, etc., are scrubbed with this infusion. Its merits as an insectifuge depend upon its bitter principle. It is not often used now, having given way to carbolic acid, or chloride of lime, which are much more efficacious.

The Best Way of Making Turpentine Compresses.—Take a piece of flannel folded four times and pour turpentine over it till it is saturated, then dip it into boiling water and wring dry and apply when hot.

Caledonian Cream.—Beat the whites of two eggs to a stiff froth, and mix with it gradually two ounces of strawberry jam, two ounces of currant jelly, and, if liked, two ounces of good sugar; serve on a glass dish piled high. Almost any jam will make this sweet,

Scallop of Mutton.—Take scraps of cold mutton and cut them into small pieces; put a layer of the meat into a dish, then a layer of stewed tomatoes—canned tomatoes will do—then a layer of bread crumbs; sprinkle with salt and pepper, and add a few bits of butter, then another layer of meat, and so on until the dish is full. Have the last layer of crumbs. Bake in a moderate oven one hour and a half.

Celery Sauce.—Boil two heads of celery in salted water, with a bunch of sweet herbs and some whole pepper and salt to taste; when thoroughly done, pass them through a sieve. Melt a piece of butter in a saucepan, mix a tablespoonful of flour with it, then add the celery pulp, stir, and dilute to the proper consistency with milk.

Fried Fish.—Fried fish absorbs just as much of the grease in which it is cooked as is proportionate to its bulk. A very thick fried sole will sometimes have assimulated the greater part of half a pound of butter. A steak cut from the middle of a prime codfish has a similar capacity of absorption.

About Finger Rings.

BY E. M. D.

FROM the earliest times a mysterious significance has been associated with rings, and these apparently trivial little trinkets have played a very important part in the world's history.

They have been used as symbols, tokens of trust, insignia of command, badges of rank and honor, pledges of faith and alliance, and also as signs of servitude.

Of all ornaments this is supposed to have been the first worn. All the Hindu Mogul divinities are represented with rings, so likewise are the gods of Elephanta.

Mythologists told an ingenious fable to account for their origin; Jove, upon loosing the Titan Prometheus from his rock of torture, obliged him, as a perpetual penance, to wear for ever on his finger a link of the chain set with a fragment of the Caucasian rock.

The Bible gives innumerable sentences of the importance of the signet ring: Darius sealed with his the den of lions. Jezebel made use of the ring of Ahab to seal the counterfeit letters ordering the death of Naboth.

One of the oldest rings extant is that of Cheops, the founder of the Great Pyramid; it is of gold with hieroglyphics; and the use of the scarabei and signet rings of the ancient Egyptians date from a remote period of history.

They were made of gold, silver, bronze, precious stones or faience. Sometimes the bezels were solid and did not move, sometimes they were inlaid with scarabs inscribed with various devices, or the name of the wearer, and revolved.

During the XVIII. dynasty a very pretty class of ring was made at Tel-el-Amarna, in blue, green, and purple glazed faience; examples are very numerous, and every Egyptian collection of importance contains several. The band of these rings is seldom more than the eighth of an inch thick.

Some have a plate with a bas-relief of the god Baal playing on the tambourine, as the inventor of music; others have their plate in the shape of the right symbolical eye, emblem of the sun, of a fish, or of a scarabæus, while some represent flowers or bear hieroglyphical inscriptions with the names of Amen Ra, and of other gods and monarchs. These rings are of a substance finer and more fragile than glass.

Scarab, or scarabæus, is the name given by Egyptologists to the myriads of models of a certain beetle which are found in mummies and tombs, and in the ruins of temples in Egypt and other countries, the inhabitants of which had trading and other relations with the Egyptians.

These are dung feeding insects, and generally of a black hue, but amongst them are to be found some adorned with the richest metallic colors. According to Horapollo, a scarabæus denotes an only begotten son, generation, father, world, and man.

The first, because the scarabæus is a creature self-produced; the idea of generation arises from its supposed acts; a father, because it is engendered by a father only; world, because in its generation it is fashioned in the form of the world, and man, because there is no female race among them.

Small scarabs set in rings were placed on the fingers of the dead or were wrapped in linen bandages, with which the mummy was swathed over the heart.

They represented the belief of the Egyptians of the revivification of the body and in the renewed life after death which was typified by the Sun, who renewed his life daily.

It is certain that no Egyptian was buried without one or more rings. On the little finger of the left hand was placed one—usually of gold—in the bezel of which was mounted a handsome scarab inscribed on the base with his name and titles.

The ring was supposed to confer upon the deceased some power, and if the relations of the deceased were unable to buy them in gold or silver, they made use of faience rings, or even of small strings of beads, which they tied on the fingers in lieu of rings.

By an easy transition the custom of scarabs on the bodies of the dead passed to the living and men and women wore the scarab partly for fashion's sake, partly as a silent act of homage to the Creator of the world, who was not only the God of the dead, but of the living also.

The Homeric poems make mention of ear-rings only; but in the later Greek legends, the ancient heroes are described as wearing finger-rings.

Counterfeit stones in rings are mentioned in the time of Solon, who made stringent laws concerning them, and also prohibited sellers of rings from keeping the model of a ring they had sold.

The Lacedemons, according to the laws of Lycurgus, had only iron rings, despising those of gold.

Etruscans and Sabines wore rings at the period of the foundation of Rome, 753 B. C.; and the workmanship of the Etruscan jewelers was of peculiar beauty. Pliny relates that the first date in Roman history in which he could trace any general use of rings was in A. U. C. 449.

Mithridates, the famous king of Pontus, possessed a museum of signet rings.

With the increasing love of luxury and show, the Romans as well as the Greeks covered their fingers with these ornaments, some even wearing different kinds for summer and winter. According to Martial, one Clarinus wore daily no less than sixty.

In getting up pleasure parties—which we moderns call picnics—the Romans made a temporary exchange of rings as vouchers that they would fulfil their engagement.

Lucian describes a rich Roman who wore sixteen rings—two on each thumb and each finger except the middle one—which was held in a species of reprobation.

Seneca says: "Our fingers are loaded with rings, each joint adorned with a precious stone."

Pliny remarks: "The wealth of a whole family is worn on the finger."

Heliogabalus never wore the same ring twice.

In the year of Rome 775, it was decreed that no one should have the privilege of wearing a ring unless he, his father, and his grandfather, all free-born men, had possessed four hundred thousand sesterces (about $16,000) in landed property, and had, in accordance with the lex Julia on theatres, the right to sit on the fourteen rows of seats.

Rings were given among the Romans on birthdays. The gladiators often wore heavy rings, a blow from which was sometimes fatal.

The Romans had also their amulets and magic rings, on which were engraved one or more stars, the head of Anubis, a sign of the Zodiac, or a human foot.

Rings were in common use among our British, Saxon and mediæval ancestors. According to Pliny the Britons wore them on the middle finger, and some of the Anglo-Saxon rings that have been discovered are of most excellent workmanship; notably one of gold enamelled, now in the British Museum, that belonged to Ethelwulf, King of Wessex (837-857).

The ring of Solomon—so Hebrew legends say—possessed most marvellous powers. The mystic word schemhamphorae was engraved upon it, and every day at noon it transported him into the firmament, where he heard the secrets of the universe.

Plato relates how the ring of Gyges, King of Lydia, rendered its owner invisible when turned inwards. Herodotus tells a similar story of the same ring.

From Asia legends connected with rings were introduced into Greece, and from Greece to Italy, numberless miraculous powers being ascribed to them.

They were supposed to protect from the "evil eye," from the influence of demons, and dangers of every kind, though it was not simply in the rings themselves that the supposed virtues existed so much as in the materials of which they were composed; in some precious gem that was set in them, some device or inscription on the stone, or some magical letters engraved on the circumference of the ring.

According to the Gnostic theories, the properties of the sun on the destinies of men were of the very greatest importance; the mystical virtues of the most precious stones being under the solar influence.

Thus, to increase the power of gems, certain figures of characters were graven upon them at the precise moment when the conjunction of the heavenly bodies was favorable to the object in view.

If the gem were intended to render its wearer victorious, the effigy of Mars or that of Hercules subduing the Hydra was engraved upon it at the precise hour when the aspect of the heavens was indicative of victory.

Planetary rings were formed of the gems assigned to the several planets, each set in its appropriate metal.

Dactyliomancia (from two Greek words signifying ring and divination) was a favorite operation of the ancients. It was one of the modes of inquiring by magical means who should succeed to the Roman emperorship.

The letters of the alphabet were laid in a circle, and a magic ring suspended above was believed to point to the initial letters of the name of him who should be the future emperor.

Another ancient mode of divining by the ring is similar in principle to the modern table rapping.

The edge of a round table was marked with characters of the alphabet and the ring suspended above them stopped over certain letters, which being joined together composed the answer.

Divination by sounds emitted on striking two rings was practiced by Execetus, tyrant of the Phocians.

In the enchanting rings of the Greeks, the position of the celestial bodies was most important. Pliny states that all the Orientals preferred the emerald jasper as an infallible panacea for every ill.

Its power was strengthening when combined with silver instead of gold; most rings used for magical purposes were of jasper.

Appolonius, of Tyana, in Cappadocia, deemed the use of charmed rings so essential to the practice of medicine, that he wore a different one each day of the week marked with the planet of the day.

Galen mentions a green jasper amulet belonging to the Egyptian king, Nechepsus, who lived 630 years before the Christian era. It was cut in the form of a dragon, surrounded with rays and worn to strengthen the organs of digestion.

Licoti, a Genoese physician of the nineteenth century, who wrote a book on rings, ascribed the want of virtue in medicated rings to their small size, observing that the larger they were, or the gem in them, the greater the effect.

The names of the three kings of Cologne constituted a popular charm against diseases and evil influences in the middle ages. The three kings, Gaspar, Melchior and Balthazar, were supposed to be the "three wise men from the east" of the Bible.

Whilst names of saints were employed for the prevention or relief of bodily ailments, those of "devils" were made the agency for criminal objects.

There is much and interesting information to be found in LeLoyer's curious work, "Des Spectres," concerning the demons that were believed to be imprisoned in rings or charms, and the magicians of the school of Salamanca and Toledo, who made traffic of this kind of ware.

A learned German physician has given an instance in which the devil of his own accord inclosed himself in a ring as a familiar, thereby proving how dangerous it is to trifle with him.

Among charges brought against Joan of Arc was that she had charmed rings to secure victory over her enemies.

A toadstone ring had the virtue of protecting new-born children and their mothers from the power of the fairies; and this continued a late day superstition, for Joanna Baillie, in a letter to Sir Walter Scott, mentions one having been repeatedly borrowed from her mother for that purpose.

Fenton says: "There is to be found in the heads of old and great toads a stone, which, used as rings, gives forewarning against venom."

According to Albertus Magnus, the most valuable variety of this coveted gem has the figure of a toad engraved on it, and cures the bite of a rat, wasp, spider, or any venomous animal.

These stones formed a principal ingredient in the incantations of nocturnal hags.

In the Highlands of Scotland the toadstone was supposed to prevent the burning of houses, sinking of boats, and if a commander in the field had one about him he would either win the day or all his men would die on the spot.

The mystic emblem of the T (tau) on rings was early esteemed a sacred symbol, and considered the mark placed on the forehead mentioned in the Bible.

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"And Ardelia liked him, that wus plain to see; at fust as I watched and see him totter, I thought she wus a sort o' wobblin' too, and when he fell deep, deep in love, I looked to see her a follerin' on. But Ardelia, as soft as she wus, had an element of strength. She wus ambitious. She liked Abram, but she had read novels a good deal, and she had for years been LOOKIN' FOR A PRINCE TO COME A RIDIN' UP TO THEIR DOORYARD IN DISGUISE WITH A CROWN ON UNDER HIS HAT, AND WOO HER TO BE HIS BRIDE.

"And so she braced herself against the sweet influence of love and it wus tuff—I could see for myself that it wus, when she had laid out to set on a throne by the side of a prince, he a holdin' his father's scepter in his hand—to descend from that elevation and wed a husband who wus a moulder of bread, with a rollin' pin in his hand. It wus tuff for Ardelia; I could see right through her mind (it wusn't a great distance to see) and I could see just how the conflict was."

She takes off FOLLIES, FLIRTATIONS, LOW-NECKED DRESSING, DUDES, PUG DOGS, TOBOGGANING, etc.

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Humorous.

INFANT REASONING.

To-day I asked my mamma if I could whistle—
Yes I did.
"Oh, no, my girlie," said she; "you're too little"—
So she did.
But Tom stepped so hard right on my toe
I cried, I did.
She said, "Oh, you're too big a girl to cry out so"—
That's what she did.
Why can't I cry if I am little?
Or if I'm big why can't I whittle?

Extends from Pole to Pole—The unveracity of anglers.

A hardware merchant advertises "fall novelties in skates."

It makes a pugilist groggy to get a hot punch in his stomach.

A volume that will bring tears to your eyes—A volume of smoke.

What conundrums are always at home?—Those that are never found out.

A woman can't throw straight to save her life, and yet she insists on having her fling.

"I'll knock the daylight out of you!" Having said which the horizon bumped up against the sun and made good its threat.

Nell: How did she catch that awful cold, I wonder?

Belle: Putting on airs, very probably.

"Alas! I am thrown upon the hard world," muttered the humorous school boy as the teacher knocked him over on the globe.

The height of economy is reached when a woman puts her wedding gown away thinking she may use it for a second marriage.

A woman always keeps her photographs of herself—one taken when she was a year old, sitting on a hair rug, and another in her wedding dress.

"Well, Willie," asked grandma, "have you had all the dinner you want?"

"Nome," answered the truthful little boy, "but I have had all I can eat."

Mother: Tommy, you're really too bad! Here's a hole in your trousers that wasn't there this morning.

Tommy: Where do you suppose it was, then?

Slobbs: Yes; the doctor said my wife and I didn't get enough exercise, so we stopped riding bicycles, and——

Blobbs: What's your new exercise?

Slobbs: Now we're dodging them.

Dobson: I'm going to open a temperance hotel.

Hobson, persuasively: I wouldn't if I were you, old man. Selling liquor without a license is extremely risky business.

Teacher, severely: Tommy Smith, come here. Why haven't you learned your geography lesson?

Tommy: 'Cause the papers say there's going to be a change in the map of Europe.

Humorist: I'm engaged on a tip-top story now.

Friend: That so?

Humorist: Yes; I've changed my room. I'm in the attic now.

Nell: Did you enjoy the performance last night?

Belle: No, it was stupid. Nearly every woman in the house took her hat off, and there was nothing to look at but the play.

The facetious highwayman held his knife under the victim's nose.

"This is a pretty knife," said he; "you're liable to get stuck on it."

"You needn't explain the joke," said the other, who was not an Englishman; "I can see the point."

Scene—An Irish cabin. Pat is ill. Doctor has just called.

"Well, Pat, have you taken the box of pills I sent you?"

"Yes, sir—be jabers, I have! But I don't feel any better. Maybe the lid hasn't come off yet!"

"James," remarked the kind employer, "you have done faithful service."

"Yes, sir," replied James.

"I am now about to give you an opportunity to rise," continued the kind employer. "You may get up at 5 o'clock and come down and sweep the store."

"It's a sad thing," said the sympathetic man, "but Blykins has become a veritable miser."

"Impossible."

"It's true. The last I heard of him he didn't get any pleasure out of anything except sitting down in his cellar counting his hoard of anthracite coal over and over again."

After the dog liar, the smart baby liar and the horse liar had their turns the common, ordinary liar said:

"Well, you fellows own some pretty bright live stock, but I don't think any of them compare with my educated katydid."

"What does it do?" asked the man with the dog that knew the time of day.

"My wife's sister is a schoolma'am, and has taught the insect to say 'Kathryn did.'"

FEATHERS IN HATS.—Sir William Flower of the Natural History Museum at South Kensington, has publicly expressed an opinion, which coming from so distinguished a naturalist cannot fail to be of the greatest possible weight, on the subject of ladies wearing feathers in their hats and bonnets.

Sir William inveighs more particularly against the use of the aigrettes usually known as osprey feathers. He says:

"Especially has it been pointed out that the lovely, delicate plumes of the small white herons or egrets can only be procured by the destruction of the birds during the season in which they have their nests and young, as then only are these feathers developed.

"In the trade, for some unknown reason, they are called 'osprey,' though the real bird of that name, a kind of fish hawk, produces no ornamental plumes.

"Notwithstanding all that has been said the fashion is as prevalent as ever. I have recently noticed many of the gentlest and most kind-hearted among my lady friends, including some who are members of the Society for the Protection of Birds, and who, I am sure, would never knowingly do any injury to living creature, adorned with these very plumes.

"Why is this? Simply because, in order to keep up their trade and dispose of their stock the purveyors of female raiment, to salve the consciences of their customers, have invented and widely propagated a monstrous fiction, and are everywhere selling the real feathers warranted as artificial!

"Within the last few days I have examined numbers of plumes, the wearers of which were priding themselves on their humanity, relying upon the assurance of the milliner that they were not real egret's feathers, but manufactured.

"In every case I did not take a very close scrutiny to ascertain that they were unquestionably genuine.

"The only 'manufacture' consisted in cutting the plume in two, and fixing the upper and lower half side by side, so that a single feather does duty for two in the 'brush.'

"Thus one of the most beautiful birds is being swept off the face of the earth, under circumstances of peculiar cruelty, to minister to a passing fashion, bolstered up by a glaring falsehood."

TOLERATION.—It is obvious that the consideration of our attitude towards the opinions of others must have some influence on our attitude towards our own opinions.

It may be said that men who are certain of their opinions must naturally wish to impose them on all, and that toleration is only possible when opinions are regarded as open questions.

This however gives a false meaning to toleration, and abolishes it entirely as a virtue, for toleration is concerned with the mode of holding our own opinions and applying them to others. A man of vague and uncertain opinions cannot lay claim to toleration; he is simply indifferent and incapable.

The tolerant man, on the other hand, has decided opinions, but recognises the process by which he reached them, and keeps before himself the truth that they can only be profitably spread by repeating in the case of others a similar process to that through which he passed himself. He always keeps in view the hope of spreading his own opinions, but he endeavors to do so by producing conviction.

He is virtuous, not because he puts his own opinions out of sight, or because he thinks that other opinions are as good as his own, but because his opinions are so real to him that he would not have any one else hold them with less reality.

HIS APPRECIATED IT.—He was exploiting the good qualities of a chum of his to a young lady friend, and this was what he said:

"Smith is one of the best fellows in the world. Why, do you know, he actually takes the entire care of his old parents."

"Well," answered the young lady, "what of it? He is only doing his duty."

"But he gives away nearly a third of his income in charity."

"He ought to."

"And is the companion of everybody in distress."

"That is nothing more than is expected of him."

"And he treats all animals as if they were human beings."

"So he should."

"He has a horse named Dick that he loves like a brother."

"Y-e s."

"You know we board together, and he never leaves the table without putting a lump of sugar into his pocket for Dick."

"Oh, the darling! Now, that is something like. Do bring Mr. Smith round and introduce him. Gives sugar to his horse. I never heard of anything so sweet. I should just dote on knowing him."

RECREATION AND MORAL IMPROVEMENT.—Many are injured morally and spiritually through an excessive fondness for company and pleasure. A certain amount of diversion is both right and proper, but it should be well chosen, wisely timed, and moderately indulged in. Recreation must have a beneficial purpose, having regard to the invigoration of the body, the relief of the mind, and the good of the soul.

When, then, we find our enjoyments interfering with our physical, mental, or moral improvement, timely notice is given to us that we must either moderate them or relinquish them altogether. He is wise who observes this rule, both as respects the kind and degree of his amusements.

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Leave 24th and Chestnut Sts., 4.00, 11.04, a m, 12.37 (Dining car), 3.08, 4.10, 6.12, 8.12 (dining car), 11.56 p m. Sunday 4.00 a m, 12.04, (dining car), 4.10, 8.12, 8.12, (dining car), 11.58 p m.

Leave New York, foot of Liberty street, 4.30, 8.00, 9.00, 10.00, 11.30 a m, 1.30, 2.00, 3.30, 4.00 (two-hour train), 4.30 (two-hour train), 5.00, 6.00, 7.30, 9.00 p m, 12.15 night. Sundays—4.30, 8.00, 10.00, 11.30, a m, 2.00, 4.00, 5.00 p m, 12.15 night.

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